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# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

GOLD STREET HOTEL SITE

PHASE 1A ARCHAEOLOGICAL

DOCUMENTARY STUDY

15-92 CGBSA

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GOLD STREET HOTEL SITE

CEQR #15-92-CQBSA

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## INTRODUCTION

In order to gain approval for a proposed project (CEQR #15-92-CQBSA) on Block 68, Lot 28, in lower Manhattan, certain City Environmental Quality Review requirements must be satisfied. Among them is an Archaeological Documentary Study of the site. According to a directive from the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), a Phase 1A Documentary Study of the proposed Gold Street Hotel site is required because of the possible existence of cultural resources on the site. A Phase 1A Archaeological Assessment is based on documentary research and a site survey. No subsurface testing is involved. The purpose of the archival study and the site survey is to address the issues of 1) the potential of the Gold Street Hotel site to have contained significant archaeological resources, and 2) the possibility that any such resources may have survived the subsurface disturbances concomitant with urban development.

The site is Lot 28 on Block 68 bounded by Maiden Lane, William, Platt, and Gold Streets (Figure 1). Lot 28, on the corner of Gold and Platt Streets, is currently vacant and used as a parking lot (Figure 2 and Photos 1-3). The street address for the Gold Street frontage is 15 Gold Street and along Platt Street the numbers, beginning at Gold Street are 22, 24, 26, and 28 Platt Street. Number 28 Platt Street was once a separate lot, Lot 27. In the interests of clarity, these two lots are treated separately in the discussion of historic land use.

In chart form:

- 15 Gold Street - also known as 22, 24, 26 Platt Street. Lot 28.  
Part of the lot that was once 17 Gold Street,  
adjacent to the Platt Street corner, is now  
included in this parcel.
- 28 Platt Street - now part of Lot 28, once Lot 27.

See Figures 2, 15, and 19 for the lot configuration.

## METHODOLOGY

Background research entailed a number of tasks, each contributing to an understanding of prehistoric and historic land use of the site. The goal of the research was to provide information on the nature and scope of potential cultural resources, and the degree and nature of subsurface disturbance. In order to accomplish the tasks, several phases of research were performed including documentary research, cartographic analysis, soil boring logs analysis, site files review, and a field visit.

- 1) Maps and atlases - Located in various New York City repositories, the full range of maps and land use atlases, from 1660 to the present, were examined.
- 2) Buildings Department - The New York City Buildings Department has kept records since 1868. Current records were viewed at the Buildings Department; the Municipal Archives had no older records for the project lots.
- 3) Landmarks Preservation Commission - LPC's predictive model maps for potential prehistoric and historic archaeological sites in lower Manhattan were examined.
- 4) Tax Assessment Records - Tax assessment records dating back to the eighteenth century were researched in the Municipal Archives.
- 5) City Directories - City Directories as far back as 1787 were thoroughly perused in order to find information about the early residents of the project site parcels.
- 6) Archaeological Literature - Reports from sites in the vicinity of the Gold Street site (e.g. 60 Wall Street, Barclay's Bank) were examined for applicable data.
- 7) Secondary Source Material - Histories such as I. N. P. Stokes' *ICONOGRAPHY OF MANHATTAN ISLAND* were researched for pertinent information as were photograph collections.
- 8) Soil Borings - Available soil boring logs were studied for data about subsurface conditions and any changes in surface elevation.
- 9) Records in the DEP Sewer Bureau were studied for the dates of sewer hook-ups on the project parcels.

10) Site File Review - Site files reviews were conducted at the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and the New York State Museum, to determine if prehistoric or historic materials had previously been reported in the vicinity of the project site. The agencies provided an assessment of archaeological sensitivity based on previously developed models. (See the Appendix to this report.)

11) Site Visits - A site visit was made and photographs taken.

## PREHISTORIC POTENTIAL

Established models of prehistoric settlement and subsistence patterns for the metropolitan New York area are based on regional models developed by years of archeological investigations. These patterns varied through time with the availability and diversity of resources, environmental fluctuations, and numerous other factors. In order to predict the likelihood that the project site was utilized prehistorically on an extended basis, it is helpful to reconstruct the prehistoric environment in a general manner.

During the last episode of the Pleistocene Age in the Northeast, the Wisconsin, ice reached its maximum advance between 18,000 and 16,000 years ago. Following this time, glaciers slowly retreated north, depositing gravel along their melting margins. By 13,000 years ago the ice had retreated north, leaving the New York area open for the re-establishment of flora and fauna. Shortly thereafter, between 12,000 and 9,500 years ago, Paleo-Indians occupied the area, settling on high bluffs, river edges, and along lowland swamps. To date, no settlements have been identified within Manhattan.

Settlement pattern studies show that the following Archaic Period (7,000 to 3,000 years ago) is "represented by numerous, small, nearly always multi-component sites, variously situated on tidal inlets, coves, and bays, particularly at the heads of the latter, and on fresh-water ponds on...Manhattan Island...and along the lower Hudson River on terraces and knolls, at various elevations having no consistent relationship to the particular cultural complexity" (Ritchie 1980:143).

During the subsequent Woodland Period (3,000 to 500 years ago) Native Americans had a preference for occupying knolls or well-drained terraces in close proximity to fresh water resources. Sites of this period are often located near lakes, streams and rivers (Ibid:201). The diverse and abundant array of terrestrial and aquatic resources that would have been available in the pristine environment of lower Manhattan would have been attractive for prehistoric hunters and gatherers during this period.

At the time of European Contact, Manhattan was occupied by a large number of Munsee-Delaware speaking Indians. Robert Grumet's compiled map of known Indian land use in Manhattan based on research by numerous historians and ethnographers shows no trail or site in proximity to the RBC site. The closest one shown, several blocks north of the project site, is "Ashibic" which applies to a ridge which once existed near Beekman Street adjacent to a marsh. "Both the ridge and its neighboring marsh have been obliterated by subsequent development" (Grumet: 1981: 3).

According to Alanson Skinner's research in the early twentieth century, the only Indian remains left on Manhattan Island at that time were located at the northwestern end of the island (Skinner 1961:51). This may be the result of the earlier European development on the southern part of the island, and the later occupation by Native Americans at the northern end, and thus higher site visibility. No settlements were identified by Skinner near the Gold Street Hotel project site. In the general region of the project site - that is, lower Manhattan - a site near the Collect Pond (in the vicinity of the present City Hall) was identified by Skinner, but was based entirely on secondary accounts by early settlers (Ibid.:51).

On the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission's "Predictive Model" of prehistoric land use - based on the known availability of resources, distances to fresh water and established regional models of settlement and subsistence - the project site is not in a zone marked as sensitive. The preservation of prehistoric sites in an urban environment is rare due to the fact that later historic development often disturbs or destroys such sites. This is particularly true in lower Manhattan where development of an urban landscape has been occurring for over three hundred years. However, some prehistoric material has been recovered from archaeological excavations in lower Manhattan in recent years (e.g. the 60 Wall Street and Staadt Huys sites). These artifacts are evidence of Native American occupation, but they do not represent a verifiable in situ site.

The Gold Street site did offer certain preferred characteristics to Native Americans. The freshwater stream that flowed east through the southern portion of what is now Block 68 into the East River provided rich aquatic resources. The adjacent lowlands would have offered other valuable resources such as tuberous grasses and waterfowl. The nearby estuarine river would have provided abundant shellfish for food. According to various early cartographers the Gold Street site was adjacent to a low-lying meadow on the southeast facing slope of a hill or on the hilltop overlooking the meadow and stream. Native Americans preferred south-facing slopes because of the light, warmth and protection; hilltops, usually well-drained, provided sight vantage points and refreshing breezes. Figure 3, the Viele Map shows the topographic features of the project sit area. The streambed, depicted on Viele and the current Sanborn atlas, Figure 2, was eventually replaced by Maiden Lane (Innes 1902:297).

The ranking for prehistorical potential by the New York State Museum in Albany is "high" (See Appendix). There is no doubt that Native Americans were present in lower Manhattan. However, there are no recorded Native American finds near the Gold Street site. Albany's ranking system for sensitivity is based on a predictive model based in part on proximity to water and mapped on a current USGS topographic map. The project Block 68 appears from a current USGS topo map review to possess perhaps more prehistoric sensitivity than is realistic considering the historical manipulation of the landscape. That is, three centuries of development - including farming, landfill, construction, and demolition - have certainly disturbed and probably destroyed any remnants of prehistoric utilization since undisturbed prehistoric resources in southern New York tend to be located within relatively shallow strata beneath "A" Horizon soils. Although it is possible that a random prehistoric artifact may be uncovered at the Gold Street site, a prehistoric component per se is not a consideration for the Gold Street site.



## HISTORICAL ERA

The area in which the Gold Street Hotel project site lies is slightly north of the 17th century village of New York whose northern boundary was the wall rampart erected in 1653 at what is now Wall Street. Originally Block 68 was part of a farm grant from New Amsterdam Governor Willem Kieft to Cornelis Van Tienhoven in 1644 (Stokes 1915-27:Vol.6,155).

Historian John Innes' account of the Van Tienhoven property is particularly interesting and informative and is quoted below at some length; the reader may want to refer to Innes' map as well as the modern maps for orientation (Figures 1,2, and 4).

Standing about the year 1655, at the junction of this lane with the river road, - or at the corner of the modern John and Pearl streets [one block east and one block north of the project block, - and looking up the broad, grassy lane (of nearly the width of the present John street), one saw before him at the top of a moderate ascent, a low-roofed Dutch farmhouse, with its stoep, its swinging half-doors, its small-paned and heavy-shuttered windows, and its capacious exterior chimneys...On the left of the lane, and occupying a warm southeastern exposure upon the slope of the hill, was a garden of large size, - probably of at least an acre in area, - the site of which is now traversed by the modern Platt Street. Back of this garden was a somewhat rough hillock [of which the project site was a part] used for pasturage purposes; along its wet and springy sides the common celandine displayed its yellow flowers thickly; this plant was called by the Dutch the gouwe, and the hill became known as the Gouwenberg, which name was in the course of time corrupted by the English into Golden Hill, from which the present irregular street called Gold Street took its origin. The lower portion of that street appears to have been originally a lane giving access from Maagde Paetje, or Maiden Lane, to the pasture field just spoken of.

Innes 1902:310

In 1671 the estate of Van Tienhoven sold the farm to Jan Smedes and he sold a large portion of it which was later known as the Shoemaker's Land ("bounded by Broadway and Maiden Lane, and by a line on the N. 117 ft. N. of Fulton st., and a line on the E. bet. William and Gold Sts."); it was conveyed in 1675 by "Jan Smedes to John Harpendinck and others, shoemakers" (Stokes 1915 - 27:Vol.6,947). The Shoemaker's Land ended just west of the project lots (Figure 5).

The remaining portion of the farm (containing the project parcels) was sold in 1677 by Smedes to Hendrick Rycken, a blacksmith. Rycken, in turn, sold the farm to Dirck Jansen Vanderclyff in 1681. "In the old farmhouse this family resided for many years, and its broad land leading down the hill to the waterside must have been well trodden by the eight or ten small Vanderclyffs, or 'Van Cleefs,' as they came to be called" (Innes 1902:317). The modern Cliff Street recalls the family and one of the farm lanes.

Maiden Lane, a block south of the site, "was so named when, as Maagde Paatje (the Dutch equivalent), it was used by lovers along a rippling brook" (WPA 1939:93). Less romantic, but possibly more accurate, modern historian Joyce Gold maintains that Maiden Lane was an English translation of the Dutch term which pertained to "the young women of New Amsterdam who washed their clothes here and laid them out to dry at a small stream that flowed east to the river" (Gold 1988:77). One can see the outline of the old stream and the original shore line of the East River on Figure 2. As described above, the project site was part of Van Tienhoven's hill pasture directly north of Maiden Lane.

Agreeing with Innes' map# representation, the 1660 Castello Plan and the 1695 Miller Plan show that the project block was in the as yet undeveloped portion of New Amsterdam (Figures 6 and 7). The project site would actually be just off the Castello plan to the north). In the 18th century the part of present Gold Street bordering the project block came to be called Rutgers Hill for a local landowner, presumably Anthony Rutgers, Jr., and appears on the Lyne Plan of 1728 (Figure 8). "It began as a path from Maiden Lane to the pasture, which covered the ground bounded by what are now William, John, Fulton and Cliff Streets" (Moscow 1978:54). Platt Street had not been cut through at this time.

# [Along with a study of historical accounts, an intensive study of maps available at various New York City repositories was made in order to trace the early development of the project site and its surrounding area. Most helpful were Innes' map showing New Amsterdam about 1644 (Figure 4), the Miller Plan of 1695 (Figure 7), the 1728 Lyne Plan (Figure 8), a 1735 Plan of the City of New York (Figure 9), Grim's 1742-3-4- General Plan (Figure 10), the Maerschallck Plan of 1755 (Figure 11), and Holland's 1776 Plan (Figure 12).]

When the project block area began to shift from agrarian use to a more urban pattern as the small but vigorous young town expanded northward is an important topic when tracing the land use history of the project parcels. In Rothschild's "1703 Basic Data Archive" there are no individuals listed for Rutgers Lane (Rothschild 1990: 185-204). The first cartographic evidence found of both the street and of buildings that appear to be on the project lots are shown on the 1728 Lyne Plan (Figure 8). The 1735 Plan (Figure 9) is difficult to read, but there may well be structures on the 15 Gold Street parcel. The Grim Plan of 1742-3-4 is much clearer and the small buildings above the "11" in the Rutgers Hill street notation may be either on the 15 Gold Street parcel or in the path of what would become Platt Street (Figure 10). Similarly, the Maerschallck Plan of 1755 appears to show development on the project parcel facing Gold Street (Figure 11).

Gold Street bordering the project block continued to be shown cartographically as Rutgers Hill throughout the 18th century until the 1803 Goerck and Mangin Plan where it is called Gold Street (Figure 13). Stokes reports that the Common Council ordered the extension of Gold Street to Maiden Lane surveyed in 1789 and it was accomplished in 1790 (Stokes 1915-27: Vol.3,1001).

No entries for residents on Rutgers Hill were found in any city directories, the first of which was published in 1786. Rutgers Hill had become part of Gold Street by 1789 according to the tax assessment list which is organized by ward and street; however, no street numbers are given except #52 which is in another block of Gold Street. Anthony Rutgers owned several plots, one of which may have been 15 Gold Street. Also listed in 1789 was Thomas Stevenson who was definitely assigned to 17 Gold Street [where Platt Street would later be cut through] on the 1808 tax list. In the 1789 city directory, there are entries for J. Jadwin, a packer of pork, at #5 and Joseph Meeks, a shoemaker, at 11 Gold Street which are on the project block; there are no entries for either 15 or 17 Gold Street, the project parcels.

The 1793 city directory was searched in its entirety and Ann Smith was listed at 15 Gold Street, but she could not be located in any other directories going backward or forward in time. In the same year, Mary Stow, confectioner, and John Smith, baker, were listed next door at 13 Gold Street. The widow Hutcheon, a "sick nurse," was also listed at #13; one wonders if there was some confusion about where the Smiths actually lived. Joseph Meeks, still at 11 Gold, had become the sexton of the nearby Baptist Church. On the other side of #15, lived the Widow Dunscomb, a

"huckster" at 17 Gold Street. Tax roll listings indicate that #17 was occupied by the Stevenson family; perhaps Mrs. Dunscomb was a boarder.

On the 1808 tax roll, the taxpayer listed for both 13 and 15 Gold Street was William Rutledge, and Thomas, James, and Peter Stevenson were listed for #17. William Elliot's IMPROVED NEW YORK DOUBLE DIRECTORY of 1812 is usually a boon for the researcher since it lists names by street addresses instead of just alphabetically. However, there is no entry for 15 Gold Street. Stevenson was at #17, and on the other side at 13 Gold Street was William Rutledge, "builder" also given an address at 1 Gouverneur's Alley. By 1815 Stevenson was still at #17 and Rutledge at #13, but the taxpayer for 15 Gold Street was "Mr. Lloyd." For the next few years the names changed often on the tax lists:

- 1819: Sylvester Robinson at 15 Gold Street
- 1820: E. Rutledge at 15 Gold Street
- 1822: Joseph Riley at 15 Gold Street
- 1825: Wm. (or Mrs.) Crane, James Colt [?], A.B. Hugget, and John Thomas at 15 Gold Street
- 1826: R-- M-- Hoagland at 15 Gold Street
- 1829: Wm. Holton at 15 Gold Street

The turnover of occupants was also reflected in the city directories of the early 1830s. John Thompson, importer, was at 15 Gold Street according to both the directory and the tax roll in 1830, followed in 1831 by George Birdsall on both lists. (Next door at #13, Jacob Sexton had a button factory during the same period.)

Early maps and the listings in the city directories from 1786 onward illustrate the variety of occupations and occupants represented in the project area in what had become a mixed commercial and residential neighborhood. The city had pushed northward past the defensive wall that was no longer necessary. The port of New York was assuming world-wide importance promoting increased commercial activity. Merchants, artisans, and professionals alike often lived and worked in the same buildings. Tanneries were in the area north of the project block; William Street on the west was a dry-goods shopping district; the bustling harbor was a few blocks east. There were neighborhood churches, taverns, markets, schools, and stables, for example, serving the residents. However, none of these types of establishments or institutions were located directly on the project parcels according to Rothschild's study of 18th century neighborhoods or the Landmarks Preservation Commission Composite Map of Land Use which covers a period up to 1900.

Some documentary sources indicate a change from this "small town neighborhood" mix around the end of the first quarter of the 19th century. This is not surprising considering the emergence of the nearby Wall Street area as a financial center as well as the proximity of the seaport district. Archaeological studies on sites in the vicinity also support this conclusion. For example, about the 60 Wall Street site only a few blocks away from the Gold Street Hotel project site, the report says "with the rise in commercial activity, Wall Street properties increasingly came under the control of companies, which either razed the former dwellings or converted them into commercial properties...the study area lots fronting Pine Street also changed from mixed commercial/residential use to exclusively commercial and financial occupancy" (Bianci and Rutsch 1987:64/)

The opening of Platt Street in 1834 along the project block from Gold to William Street reflects the quickening pace of commercial development. The approximately 35 foot wide new street divided the block that had been bounded by Maiden Lane, William, Gold, and John Streets (Figure 14). Platt Street was laid out and named for Jacob S. Platt, a wealthy merchant of the 1800s because in 1832 he acquired considerable property in the area (Moscow 1978:84). In the 1830/1 city directory, Platt was listed as a hardware dealer at 281 Pearl Street whose home was at 88 Cliff Street. Platt Street appeared in tax assessments for the first time in 1834, but there were no listings on the south side of the street higher than #12 which would be in the block east of the project block. In 1835, Platt was taxed as the owner of 14 through 20 Platt Street; 20 Platt is across Gold Street from the project parcel and according to the 1836 tax assessment contained the "House of Lawyers."

The corners of what is now Gold and Platt Streets and the path of Platt Street were once the sites of 17 and 19 Gold Street; after the new street was cut through, its frontage in old Lot 28 was 22, 24, and 26 Platt Street (see discussion below for an explanation of the divisions). Hugh Maxwell owned that property from 1830 until at least 1850 although he did not reside in the store noted on the tax lists. Next door at 15 Gold Street, there were several owners of the building (once called a "grocery" on the tax list) between 1830 and 1844. Further west along Platt Street at #28, the M. Arsant Co. was the taxpayer from 1839 until 1844 when it was owned by the estate of Thos. C. Morton through 1850.

The entries in Doggett's New York City Directory for 1851 shed light on the occupants of the project parcels and their businesses. At 15 Gold Street, J.W. and J.B. Gascoigne along with Joseph Upham

owned a hardware store on the premises. [There is no entry for 22 or 24 Platt Street - see discussion below.] At 26 Platt Street, the building was occupied by:

- John Coleman, cooper
- John Bruce, copper plate maker
- Thomas Miller, umbrellas
- John Lauer, lithographer
- Francis Livingston, embosser
- John Stokel, clocks

Next door at 28 Platt Street (old Lot 27), the premises were shared by Louis Struller, cutlery, and Thos. Prosser & Son, boiler tubes.

It is the last name, Thomas Prosser, that is of particular interest. In 1851, at the Crystal Palace exhibition in London, Thomas Prosser met Alfred Krupp the founder of the German steel and arms manufacturing family. As Krupp's biographer William Manchester wrote, Prosser was the "American who would set the tires spinning across a continent" (Manchester 1968: 68). The men signed a contract in 1851; the American headquarters of the Krupp Steel Works was at 15 Gold Street.

A photograph taken about 1910 shows the four-story white building at 15 Gold Street from which Prosser operated (Figure 16). The caption on the photograph located in the New York Public Library files says, in part, "This firm, the American Representatives of the Krupp Steel Works of Germany, will move to 120 Wall Street according to the NEW YORK TIMES of Dec. 8, 1937" which means the building served as headquarters for approximately 90 years.

Information about the inhabitants of the buildings and their activities subsequent to the Prosser occupation is very sketchy. The buildings themselves will be discussed in the following section.



## LOT DIVISIONS, STRUCTURES, AND SOIL BORINGS

The creation of the new street gave rise to a strange situation in terms of street addresses and divided buildings and lots (and for the researcher attempting to bring order to peculiar data, I might add). Certainly new buildings were built along the newly created Platt Street frontage, although the actual date of construction cannot be ascertained since there are no extant building records going back that far in time. (The Block and Lot index folders for Lots 22 -30 on Block 68 are missing from Municipal Archives files.) Tax records indicate that property was sold before the street was actually cut through the block. For example, Hugh Maxwell paid tax for 24 and 26 Platt Street as early as 1830/1, but the first record of a structure is the 1840 list when Maxwell was assessed \$10,500 for a s[tore] and l[ot] at that address. At 28 Platt Street, the M. Arsant Co., importer, was taxed \$11,500 for the s[tore] and l[ot] in 1839.

It is interesting to note that no mention of 22 Platt Street - which would logically be the corner of Platt and Gold and part of Lot 28 - was found in archival sources, although the number does appear on some atlases (1894 and 1973, for example). The discrepancy is no longer moot since 22, 24, and 26 Platt Street were eventually subsumed in the 15 Gold Street building. However, the problem may have arisen as follows. When Platt Street was cut through, clearly some standing structures fronting on Gold Street were affected. These would have been 17 and 19 Gold Street. On the Dripps atlas of 1852, the Perris atlas of 1855 (Figure 15) and the Dripps atlas of 1868, a small triangular wedge-shaped lot with a building is shown on the corner of Platt and Gold Streets. There is a "gore" of land mentioned in Hugh Maxwell's (the owner of 15 Gold Street at the time) tax listing of 1847. The rather surprising conclusion one arrives at is that only part of the structure at 17 Gold Street had been removed when Platt street was created. Fortunately, this idea is supported by the text accompanying a c.1910 photograph in the New York City Public Library Photograph Collection which states that "on the North corner is the 'Jack Knife' building, #19, a triangular structure that is a remnant of a larger building, part of which was demolished when Jacob Platt cut Platt Street through in 1834" (Figure 16).

Another corroborating document is an 1874 alteration permit found in the Block 68, Lot 28 folder at the NYC Buildings Department. It describes an alteration to the existing building at 15 Gold Street which would raise the four story building - a

"hardware store" [Herr Krupp might have been insulted by the nomenclature] - from 42 feet high 47 - 55 feet in height. "The building will be about 15 feet wider when altered" because the alteration included "taking down a wall in the line of Platt Street" (Alteration Permit #649). Using measurements taken from the Perris 1855 atlas (Figure 15) and comparing them to the 1894 Sanborn-Perris atlas (Figure 17) substantiates that the 15 Gold Street building and lot was widened by 15 feet to include the small lots numbered 22, 24, and 26 Platt Street on the Perris map. Measurements for the original Lot 28 (now encompassing Lot 27 at 28 Platt Street) have remained constant since that alteration. The building(s) on the lot may or may not have been replaced by others. On this subject the Buildings Department records are very unclear. Because of apparent confusion with lot and street numbers, we recorded no data as facts unless accompanied by a plot/building drawing with which to correctly identify them.

However, from an archaeological perspective which focuses on the possible existence of subsurface cultural remains, the most important factor is that the building(s) covered the entire lot (old Lot 28) by 1852; a basement is shown by 1895 and is known to be at least 8'2" deep. (A 1920 drawing showing a new elevator installation stated that the elevator would "travel" 8'2" from the basement to the first story.) Support columns and brick piers mentioned in a 1962 document indicate that the subsurface impact of construction would be even deeper than the basement floor.

Similarly, the buildings that once stood on 28 Platt Street (old Lot 27) covered the entire lot and had basements according to atlases and documents. A 1928 document stated that the cellar of 28 Platt Street was 7'6" deep with concrete footings which would go deeper. Connected structures of five, three, and one stories are shown at 28 Platt Street in 1894 (Figure 17) with the identical configuration shown as late as 1973 (Figure 20). Some documents indicate separate buildings on the two lots, but others do not. For example, an interior connection between the buildings on old Lots 27 and 28 is shown on atlases of 1894 (Figure 17) and 1913 (Figure 14) and a Buildings Department sketch from 1931. Perhaps Prosser & Son occupied both structures. Unfortunately, there were no Demolition Permits for either lot, so the actual date of demolition - sometime after they were shown on the 1973 atlas, but before soil borings taken in 1981 - is unknown.



A set of seven soil borings taken on the project site in 1981 were examined. See Figure 21 for borings locations; elevations refer to the Manhattan Topographic Bureau Datum.

- #1) 18.0 feet of "Miscellaneous Fill" below the surface elevation of 12.7 feet. Ground water elevation -3.8 feet or 2 feet above the bottom of the fill stratum.
- #2) 13.0 feet of "Miscellaneous Fill" below the surface elevation of 13.7 feet. Ground water elevation 12.8 feet or 2 feet below the bottom of the fill.
- #3) omitted
- #4) 12 feet 6 inches of "Miscellaneous Fill, brick, wood, concrete" below the surface elevation of 16.1 feet. Ground water elevation -6.9 or approximately 10 feet below the bottom of the fill.
- #5) 12 feet 6 inches of "Miscellaneous Fill, brick, wood, concrete" below the surface elevation of 15.7 feet. Ground water elevation -8.3 or approximately 11 feet below the bottom of the fill.
- #6) 12 feet 6 inches of "Miscellaneous Fill, brick, wood, concrete" below the surface elevation of 15.4 feet. Ground water elevation -5.6 or approximately 8 feet 6 inches below the bottom of the fill.
- #7) 13 feet of "Miscellaneous Fill" below the surface elevation of 14.6 feet. Ground water elevation -3.4 or approximately 5 feet below the bottom of the fill.
- #8) 16 feet 6 inches of "Miscellaneous Fill" below the surface elevation of 13.1 feet. Ground water elevation -2.7 or 1 foot above the bottom of the fill.

Borings #1 and #8, closest to Gold Street have the thickest strata of fill which go below the ground water level. The remainder are quite similar with 13' or 12'6" of fill that ends before ground water is encountered. The site is relatively level with a differentiation of only 3 feet.

Inquiries were made at the Topographic Bureau for other sets of soil borings. Some WPA era borings had been taken nearby which showed similar strata of silty sand and clay below a fill layer, but there was no record of any taken directly on the project site.

The elevation outside the lot lines near the corner of Gold and Platt Streets has remained constant according to data from 1883, 1902, and 1991 which show it at 15'4", 15'5", and 15'5" respectively. Platt Street slopes slightly upward toward the west from Gold Street toward William Street (18'2"). There is no perceptible slope of Gold Street southward to Maiden Lane where the grade has changed from 8'in 1883 to 10'4" in 1902, 1935, and 1991.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

According to historical accounts, documents, and maps, the project site was part of an elevated piece of land used as a pasture by Dutch farmers. It may also have been used by Native Americans before the Europeans arrived. It appears that Gold Street along the project block was an early path that led north from the stream in Maiden Lane, a block to the south, along the edge or through the pasture to the farm land. The project parcels at the intersection of Gold and Platt Streets seem to have sloped upward to the north and west from the path toward what is now William Street; the project block was part of the Gouwenberg [loosely, Golden Hill] shown on Figure 4, and was later known as Rutgers Hill. This original topography has been greatly altered. The stream along Maiden Lane was filled in long ago. Today, the corner of Maiden Lane and Gold Street is only 5 feet lower than the corner of Gold and Platt Streets; the corner of Gold and Platt Streets is only 3 feet lower than the intersection of Platt and William Streets, a block to the west.

This leveling of the terrain in the area probably began during the first development period in the vicinity beginning soon after the first quarter of the 18th century as the street grid became firm, blocks were lotted, and structures were erected. Development continued with its attendant ground disturbance; The Grim Plan of 1742 (Figure 10) appears to show buildings on the project site. By 1855 buildings covered the project lots (Figure 15). It is unknown whether or not there was another generation of buildings in the interim, but by the beginning of the 20th century it is known that basements with footings and/or support piers existed in each building on the project lots, which further altered the original ground surface. And there have been subsurface alterations if not new buildings since that time. For these reasons there is extremely low potential for any intact archaeological resources from the prehistoric, Dutch or early Colonial periods to exist, although random artifacts from any of these periods might be found.

Although the exact date when buildings were first erected on the 15 and 17 Gold Street lots cannot be confirmed, it is certain that they were in place long before municipal water lines and sewers were available. Citizens relied on public pump wells and cisterns for water unless they were affluent enough to have their own wells. Waste disposal through privies, cisterns, and later modified cisterns as waste receptacles lasted into the mid-19th century. These buried features sometimes contain "time capsules" of stratified deposits that are extremely valuable to archaeologists in studying and reconstructing aspects of past lifeways that are not available in the written record.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

There is potential for the preservation of 18th and 19th century historic features beneath the shallow building basements of the most recent structures on the Gold Street Hotel site. The existence of truncated shaft features, c.1740-c.1850, is a realistic expectation in terms of archaeological resources for the Gold Street project site. There is no evidence that the project parcels hosted any kind of exceptional institution or establishment such as a church or tavern during the decades from the early Colonial periods until public utilities were available in the mid-19th century. However, the residential and/or commercial activities during these years entailed the use of backyard features such as cisterns and privies until municipal facilities were obtained. These shaft features, certainly truncated if not completely destroyed by subsequent basements and foundation construction, are considered potentially significant resources for reconstructing aspects of past lifeways.

The proposed building plans call for a 14 foot deep basement which would take it below the fill stratum as delineated in the soil boring logs. The fill stratum would contain any archaeological artifacts and features that might be present on the site since what a geotechnical inspector/soils engineer would describe as "fill" could actually be cultural resources from an earlier era. On the other hand, the fill layer may consist only of building support structures or debris from previous construction episodes that have no unique value to the archaeological record. That is, it may be that support footings or piers have disturbed the area down to the subsoil (primarily silty sand and clay across the entire block according to both sets of soil boring) that lies directly below the fill. On the other hand, since documented basement depths were 7 to 8 feet, it is unlikely that excavations for footings or piers would have destroyed features over the entire extent of the lots, and there may be some undisturbed portions containing the lower portions of backyard shaft features such as privies or wells or cisterns.

### Testing Plan

The following procedure is proposed for the Gold Street Hotel site prior to the initiation of any construction work. SOPA-certified archaeologists would monitor removal of basement fill and flooring by machinery. They would then supervise removal of foundations by machinery. If there are areas where there are no basements or foundations, they should be avoided while the remaining portions of the site are cleared of structural supports.

When the site is cleared of the necessary modern buildings and foundations (it may not be prudent to clear all building foundations from the site, as they may serve as perimeter retaining walls), archaeological testing would take place to ascertain the presence/absence of shaft features, paying particular attention to the rear portions of the two lots where shaft features normally appear. This may be accomplished by shallow scraping by machinery (e.g. gradall) supervised by the archaeologists.

If shaft features are found, they themselves would constitute archaeological deposits. The dating and location within house-lots of such features, their construction types, and variation in features both within and between sites contributes to the study of lot-specific and city-wide responses to on-site water and waste management needs. They would be tested by hand excavation for the presence of archaeological deposits. After consultation with LPC, and in accordance with LPC "Guidelines for Archaeology" (4/1987), complete or partial excavation of the shaft features, using accepted scientific techniques, would be undertaken. Vertical and horizontal provenience control would be established. The appropriate and necessary profiles, plan drawings, and photographs would be undertaken.

Concurrent laboratory processes to clean, catalog, and analyze artifacts would be established. A report of the field testing would be submitted to the client and LPC. Further documentary research (deeds of title, probate records, etc.) may be necessary in an effort to attribute particular archaeological remains to specific sets of occupants as closely as possible.

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Figure 1.

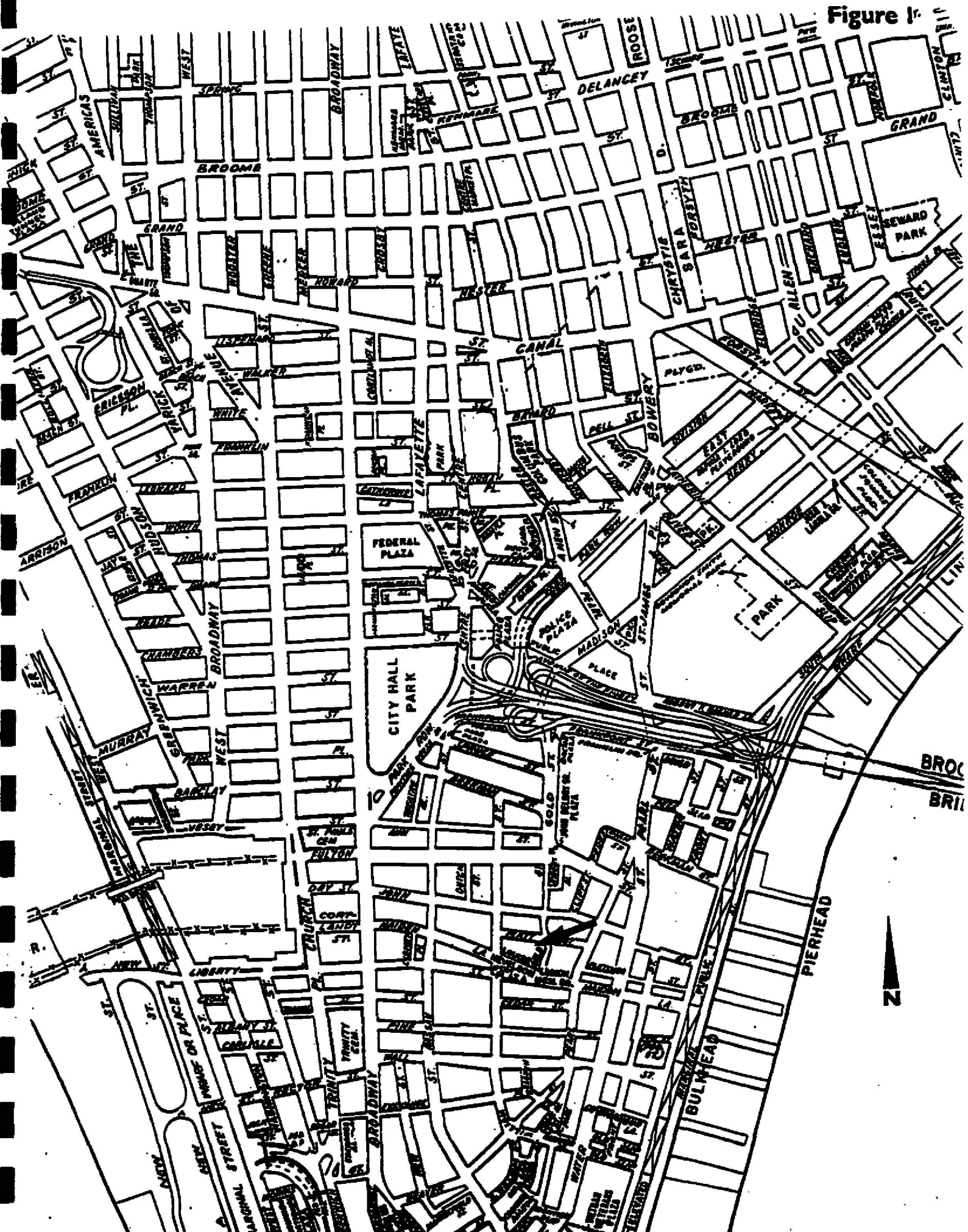


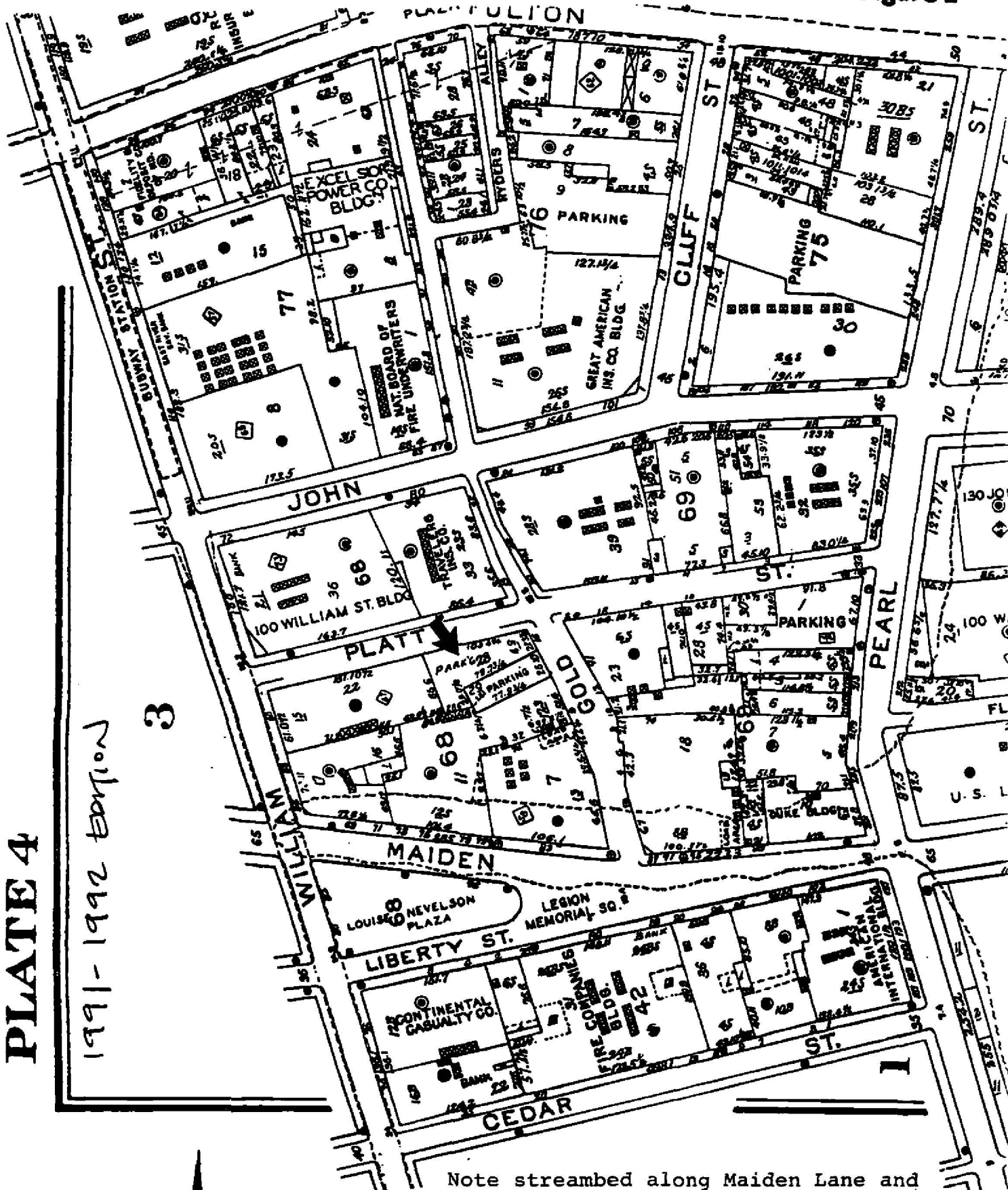


Figure 2

# PLATE 4

1991-1992 edition

3



Note streambed along Maiden Lane and original shoreline as indicated by dotted lines.

Sanborn Map Company, 1991-2

# TOPOGRAPHICAL ATLAS OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

INCLUDING THE ANNEXED TERRITORY.

Showing original water courses and made land

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF

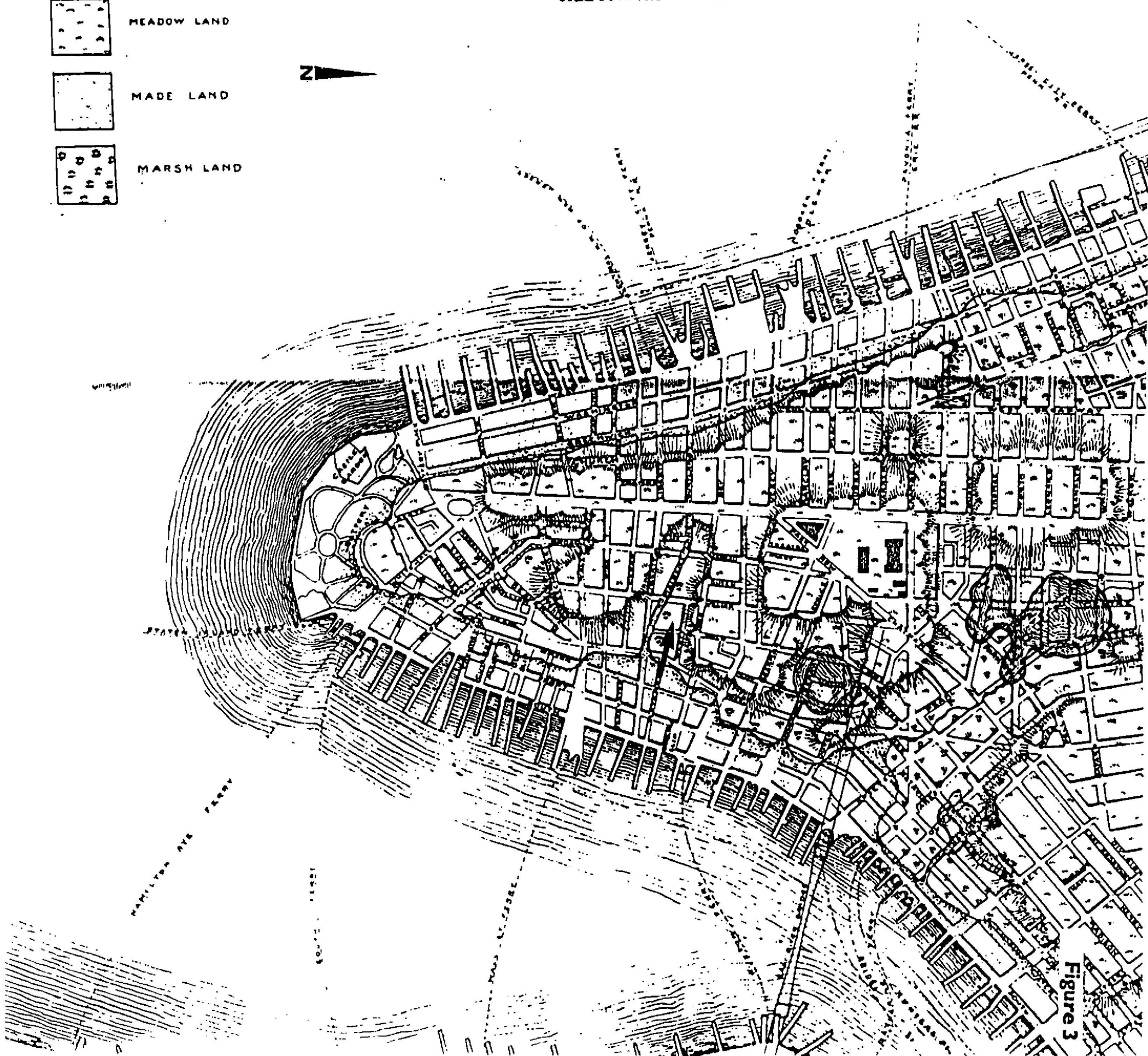
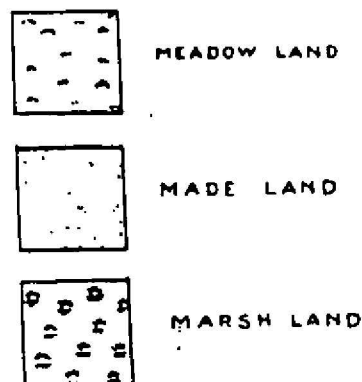
EGBERT L. VIELE,

Civil and Topographical Engineer.

234 BROADWAY, N.Y.

1874.

Scale 1000 feet = to 1 inch





*Plan of New Amsterdam*

About 1644

*Compiled from the Dutch and  
English Records by*

**J. H. INNES,**

## References

1. The old Bank of England
  2. Church and parsonage
  3. Church in the Park
  4. Stone house of the West India
  5. Brewery of the West India
  6. Bought Street in the Park
  7. House of the Fiscal
  8. The First Stone Bridge of the West India Company
  9. The Bridge
  10. The Doctor's House
  11. St. John's Church - the "West India"
  12. Drury Lane
  13. River Street (River Street)
  14. The River Street
  15. Suffield Park of the West India
- a a - River Street of the West India Company

Scale in English, feet.

A hand-drawn sketch of a river, labeled "The North River". The river is represented by a simple line with small, dense hatching or scribbles along its length to indicate water or a rocky bed. The text "The North River" is written in a casual, handwritten style above the river line, following its curve.

*Bouweria of The West India Company*

Bowen &

"Kaleh" or "Koleh" Hoek

The Common Posture

Photocopied from Innes, 1902, NEW AMSTERDAM  
AND ITS PEOPLE. The map is torn.

21

This is a detailed black and white map of the East River shore, showing various landmarks and buildings. The map includes labels for 'The Mill', 'The Fort', 'Cape St. Vincent', 'Public Dock', 'The Dock', 'Shore of the East River', 'Boulevard of Jan. 30', 'Boulevard of Cornelius Van der Meer', 'Boulevard of Philip', 'Boulevard of Arceuth', and 'Lackmann's and Landreth's'. The map also shows a 'Public Dock' and a 'Public Dock'.

# THE SHOEMAKER FARM

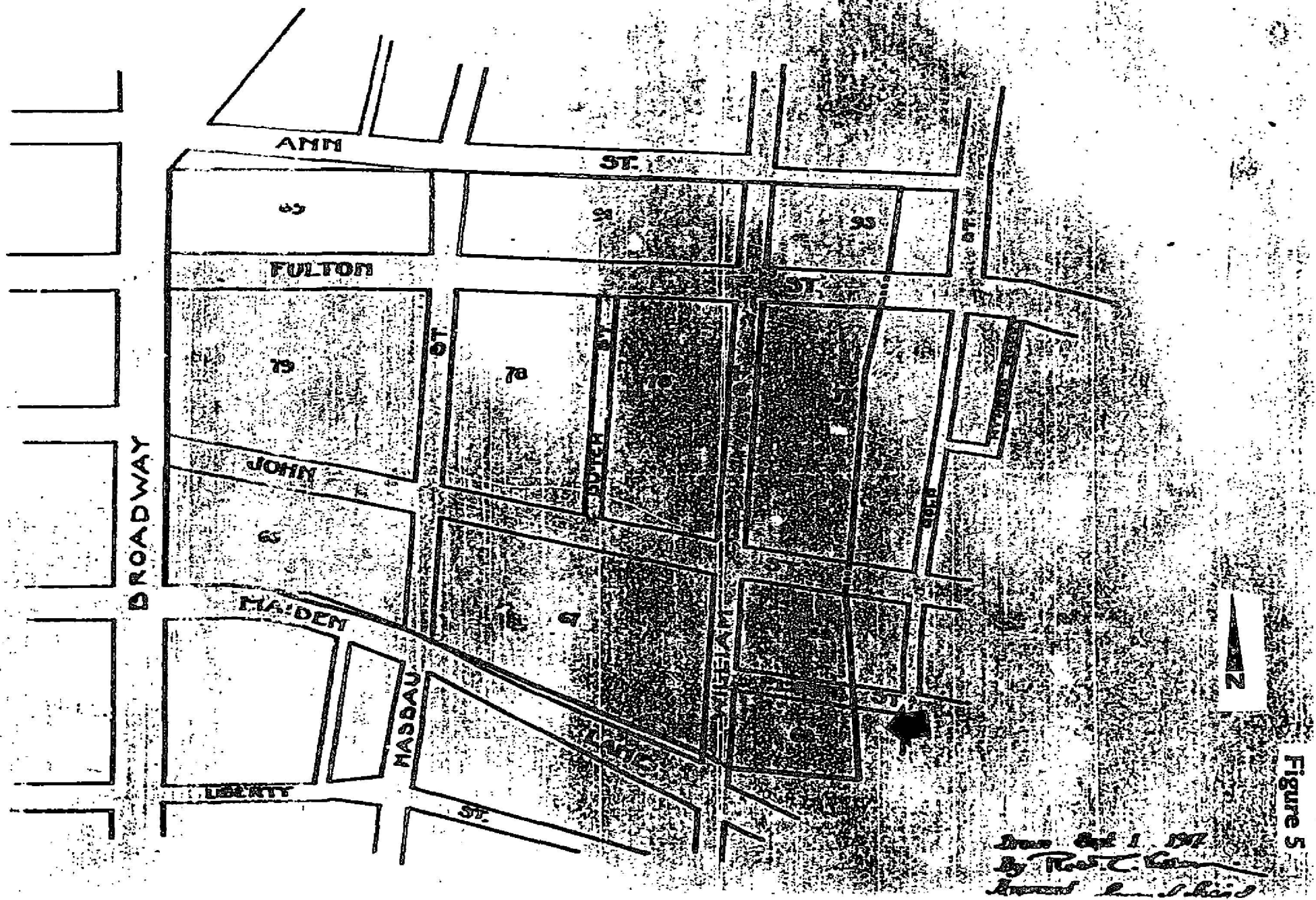


Figure 5



Figure 6



Castello Plan, 1660.

The Gold Street Hotel site would be just off the map to the north.

The Miller Plan of 1695 as redrawn for Janvier's 1894  
IN OLD NEW YORK

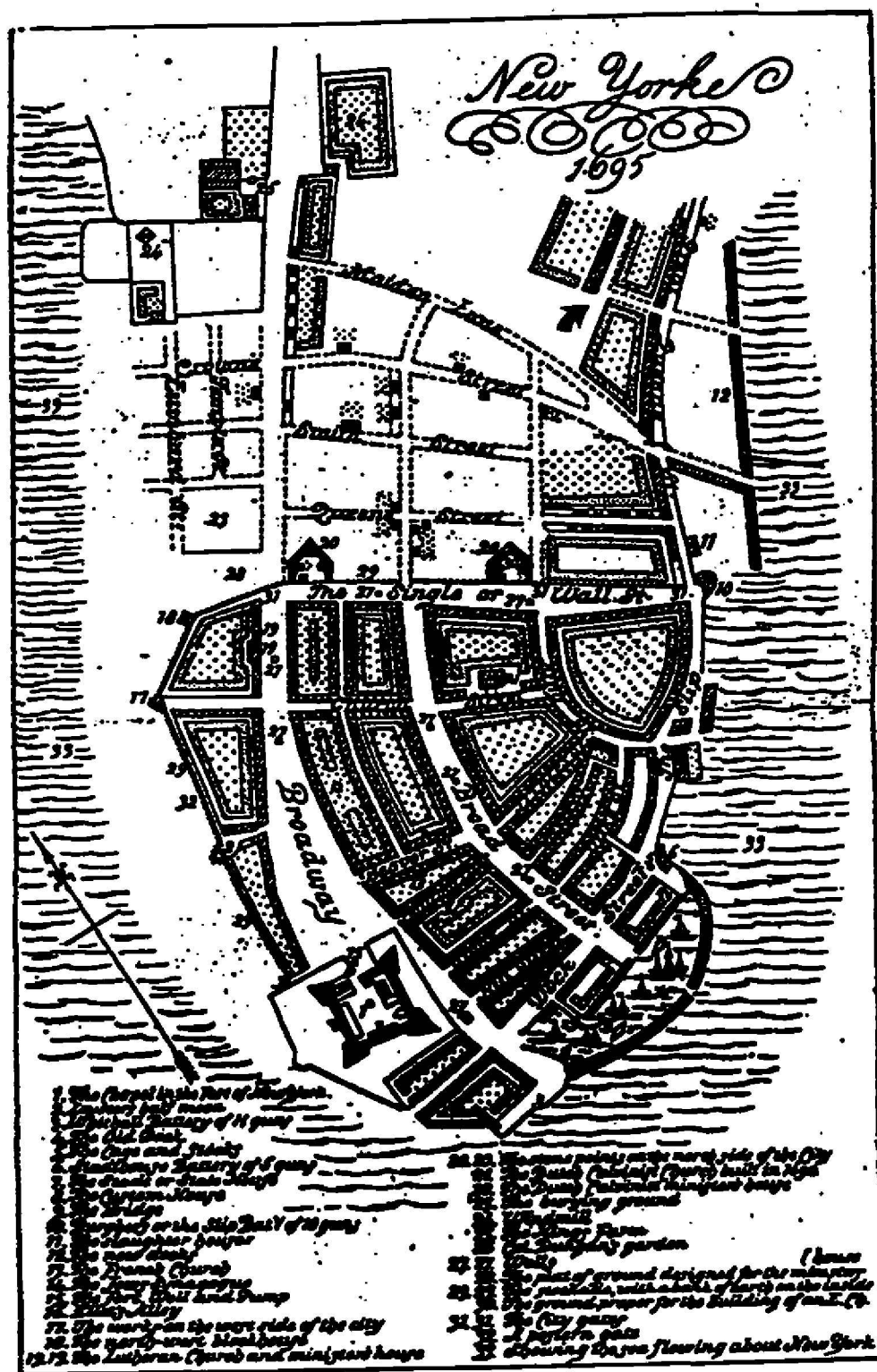
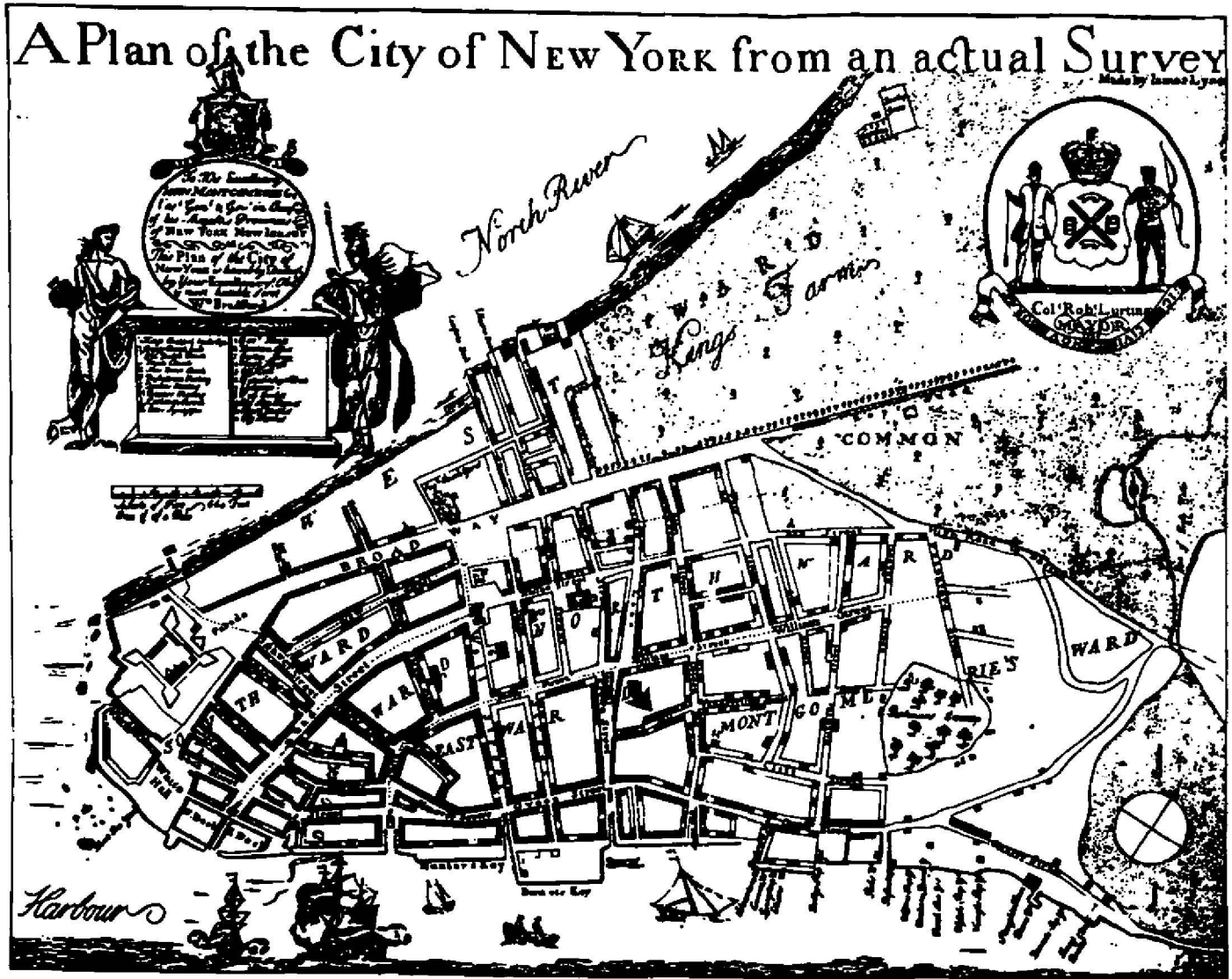
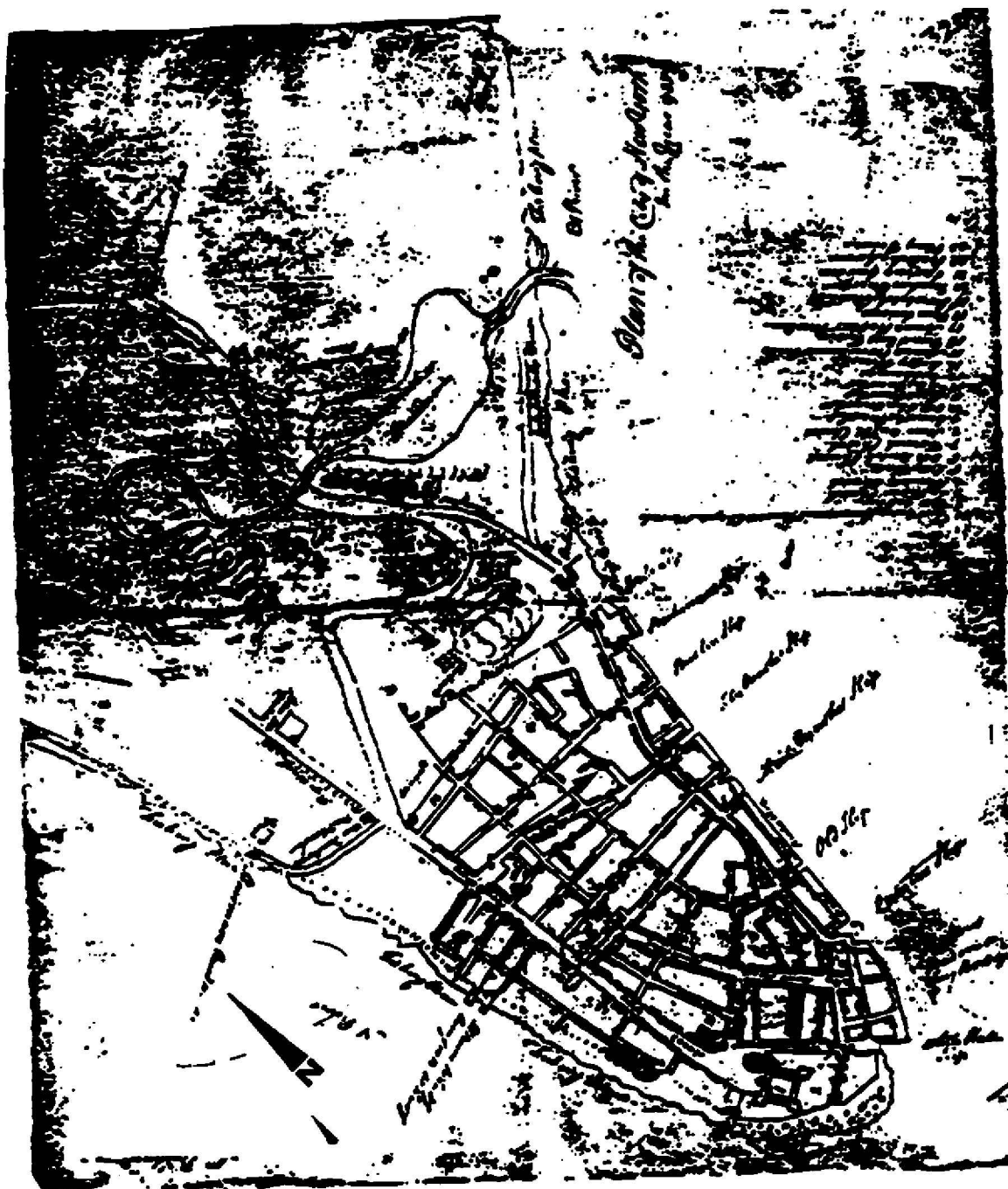


Figure 8



Lyne Plan, 1728.

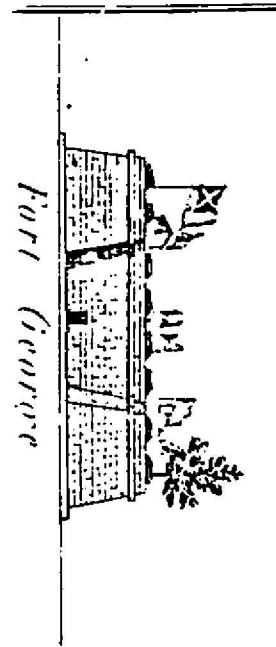
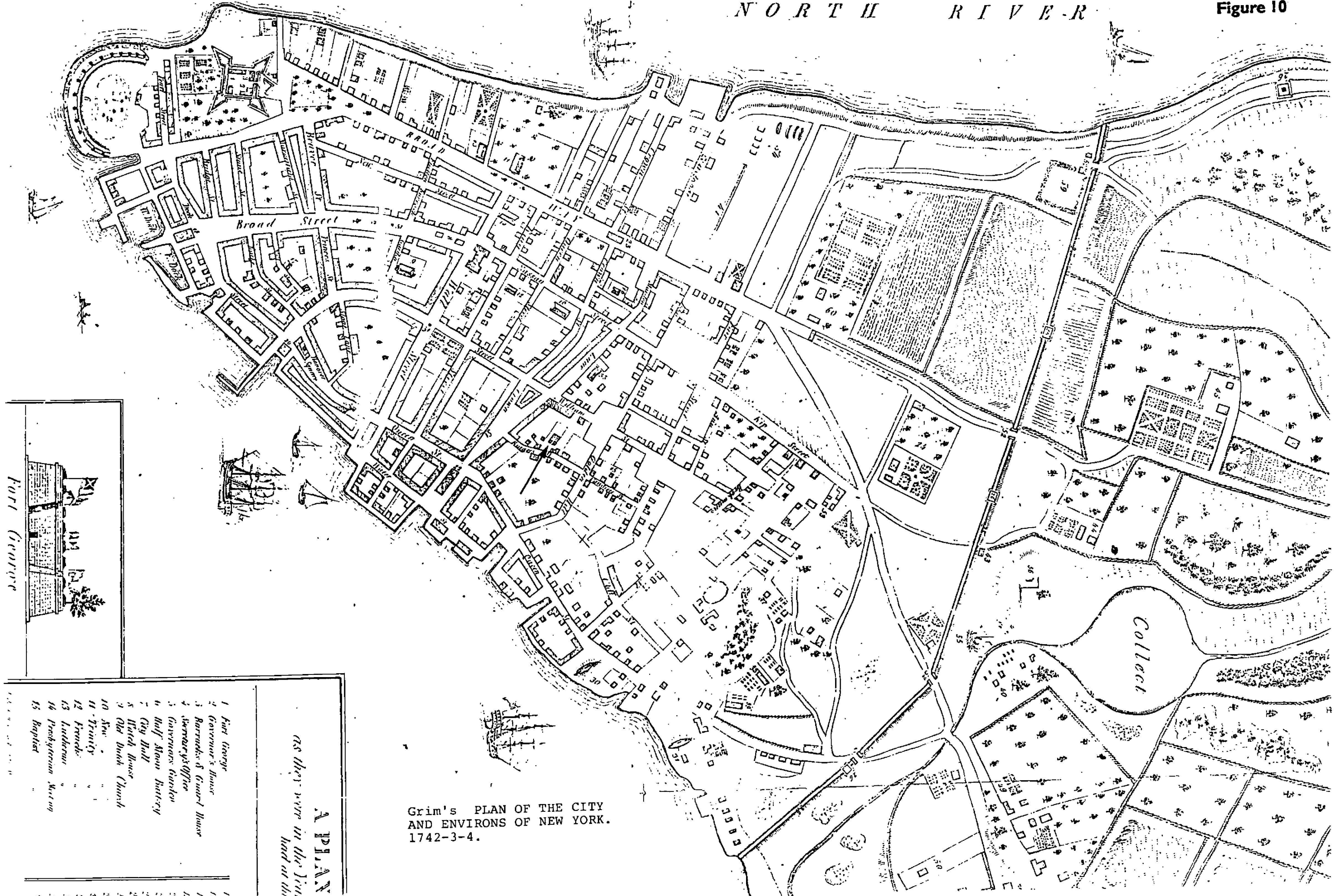
Figure 9



Photocopy of

"Plan of the City of New York in the Year 1735"  
1732-1735  
Stokes' Vol. 1: plate 30





- A PLAN  
as they were in the Year  
had at this*
- 1 Fort George
  - 2 Governor's House
  - 3 Barracks & Guard House
  - 4 Governor's Office
  - 5 Governor's Garden
  - 6 Half Moon Battery
  - 7 City Hall
  - 8 Watch House
  - 9 Old Dutch Church
  - 10 New
  - 11 Trinity
  - 12 French
  - 13 Lutheran
  - 14 Presbyterian Meeting
  - 15 Baptist

## Plan of the City of NEW YORK from an actual Survey. Anno Domini. MDCCLV

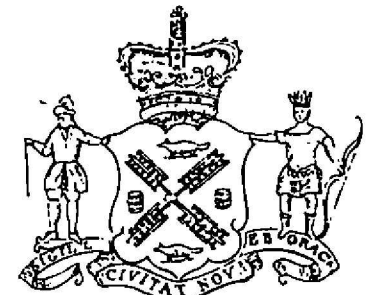
By F. Maerschalek  
City Surveyor

## REFERENCE.

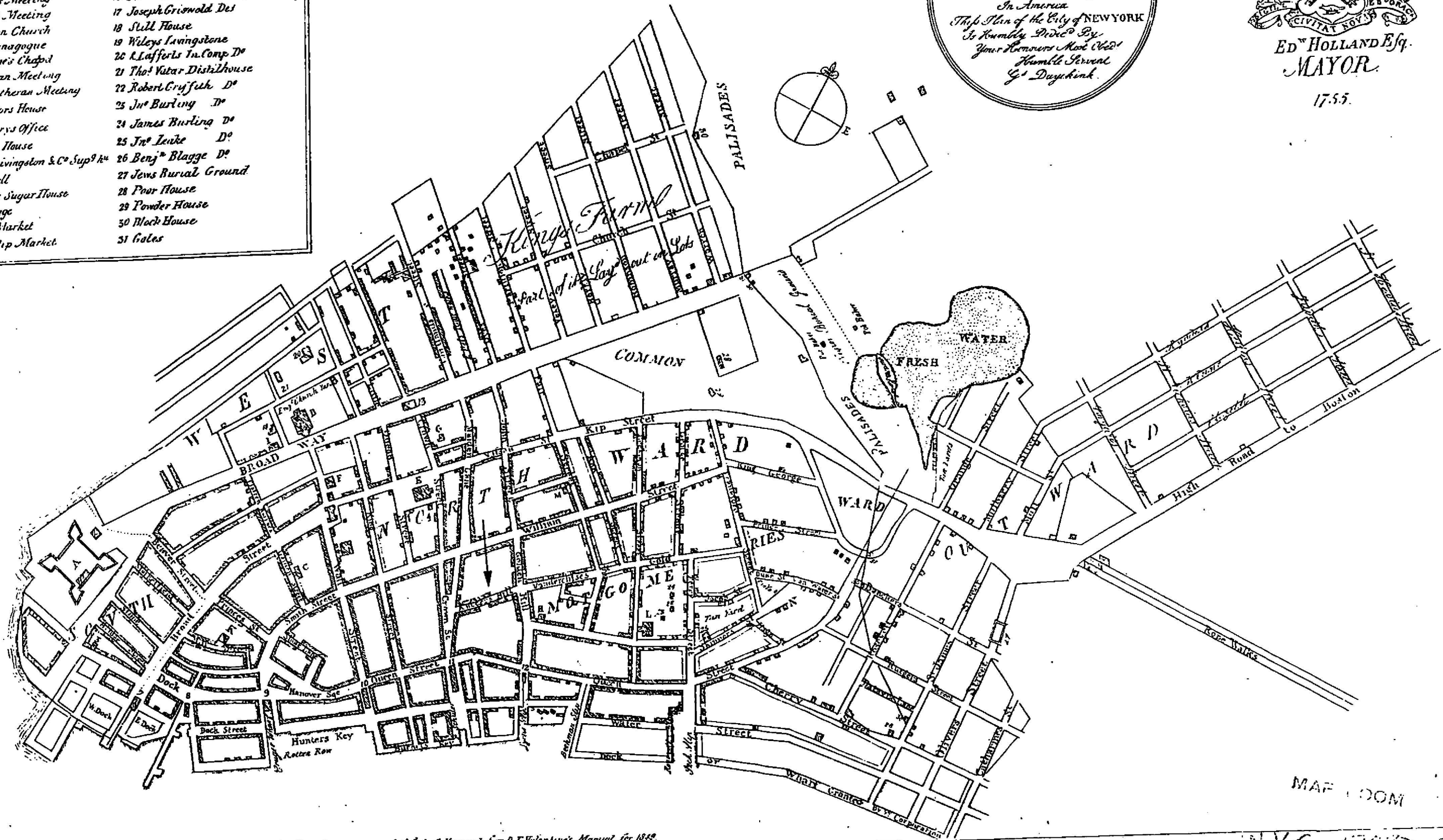
- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| A The Fort  | 10. Meat Market                    |
| B Trinity Church  | 11. Fly Market.                    |
| C Old Dutch Church  | 12. Burlans Market                 |
| D French Church   | 13. Oswego Market                  |
| E New Dutch Church  | 14. English Free School            |
| F Presbyterian Meeting                                    | 15. Dutch Free School              |
| G Quakers Meeting   | 16. Peter's Courtlands Sugar House |
| H Baptist Meeting   | 17. Joseph Griswold Des            |
| I Lutheran Church   | 18. Still House                    |
| K Jews Synagogue  | 19. Wileys Livingstone             |
| L St George's Chapel                                      | 20. Lafferts In Comp Do            |
| M Moravian Meeting  | 21. Tho' Vatar Distillhouse        |
| N New Lutheran Meeting                                    | 22. Robert Crisfith Do             |
| 1. Governors House  | 23. Jno Burling Do                 |
| 2. Secretaries Office                                     | 24. James Burling Do               |
| 3. Custom House   | 25. Jno Tenke Do                   |
| 4. Peter Livingston & Co Sup <sup>9</sup> H <sup>se</sup> | 26. Benj <sup>m</sup> Blagge Do    |
| 5. City Hall  | 27. Jews Burial Ground             |
| 6. Byards Sugar House                                     | 28. Poor House                     |
| 7. Exchange   | 29. Powder House                   |
| 8. Fish Market  | 30. Black House                    |
| 9. Old Slip Market  | 31. Gates                          |

Scale 1320 to 1/8 of a Mile

To the Honorable  
JAMES DE LANCEY Esq.  
Lieutenant Governor and  
Commander in Chief in and over  
The Province of NEW-YORK  
and Territories Depending thereon  
In America  
This Plan of the City of NEW-YORK  
Is Humbly Dedicated By  
Your Honors Most Obedt<sup>l</sup>  
Humble Servant  
G<sup>t</sup> Daychink.

ED<sup>d</sup> HOLLAND Esq.  
MAYOR.

1755.



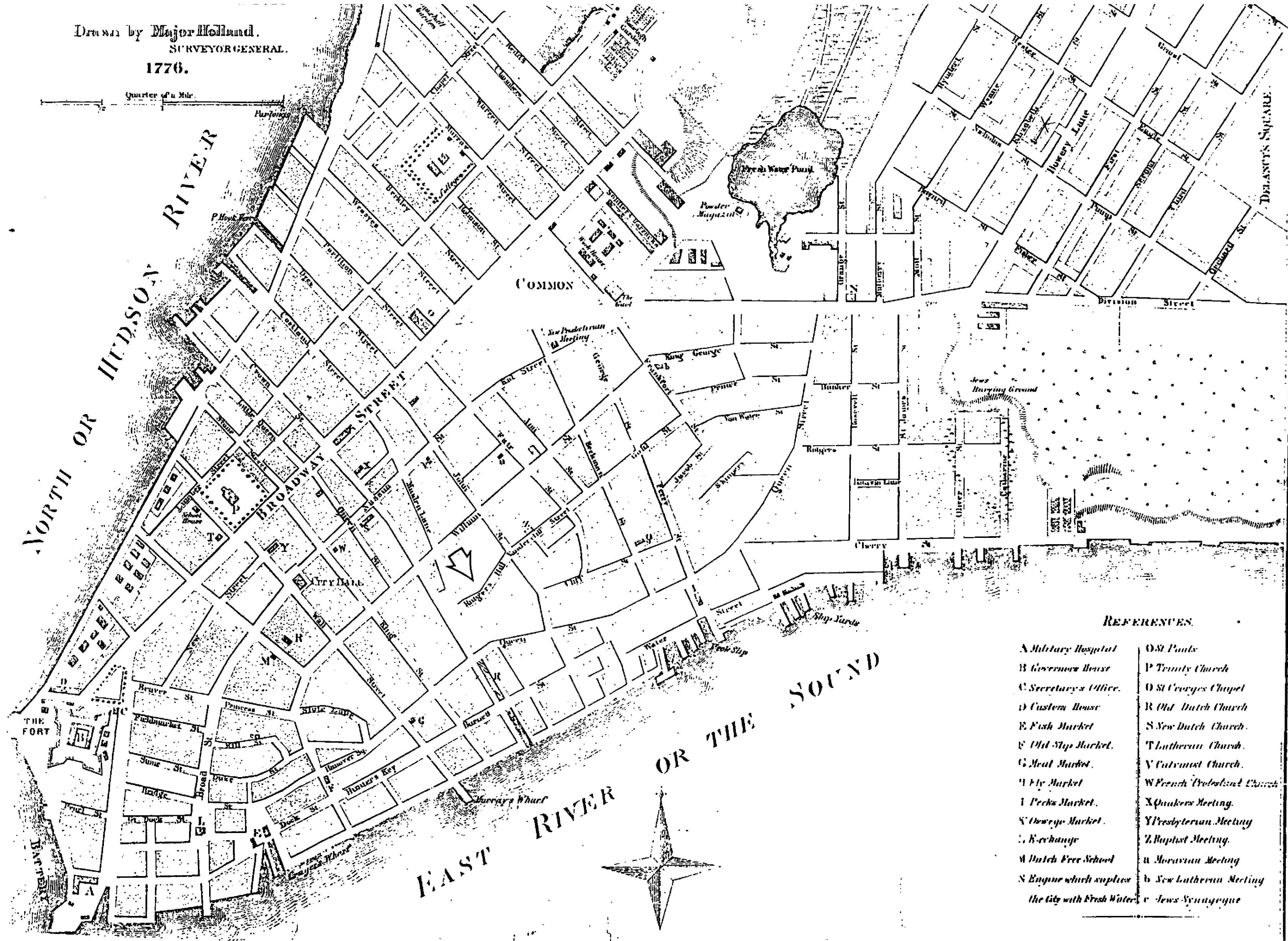
MAP 100M



Drawn by Major Holland.  
SURVEYOR GENERAL.

1776.

Figure 12



REFERENCES.

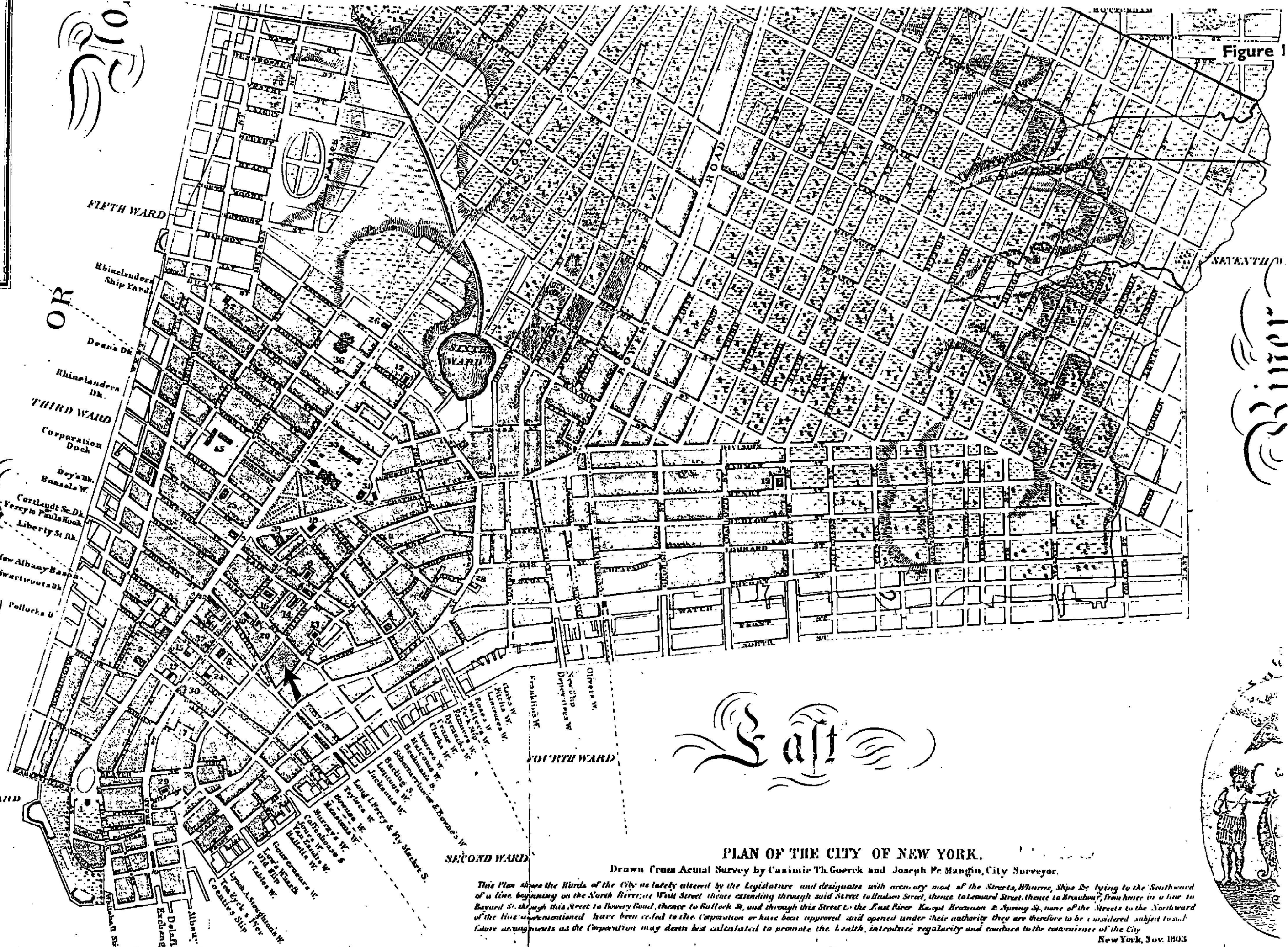
- |                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| A Military Hospital        | Q St. Pauls                |
| B Governor's House         | P Trinity Church           |
| C Secretary's Office.      | D St Georges Chapel        |
| E Custom House             | R Old Dutch Church         |
| F Fish Market              | S New Dutch Church.        |
| G Old Slip Market.         | T Lutheran Church.         |
| H Meat Market.             | V Calvinist Church.        |
| I Fly Market               | W French Protestant Church |
| J Pecks Market.            | X Quakers Meeting.         |
| K New Market.              | Y Presbyterian Meeting     |
| L Exchange                 | Z Baptist Meeting.         |
| M Dutch Free School        | a Moravian Meeting         |
| N Enquire which supplies   | b New Lutheran Meeting     |
| the City with Fresh Water. | c Jews Synagogue           |



Chamber St.  
Greenwich  
Robinson St.  
Broad Way  
Nassau St.  
Tryon Row  
Chatham St.

opposite the Park

Figure 13



# PLAN OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

Drawn from Actual Survey by Casimir Th. Goerck and Joseph P. Mangin, City Surveyor.

This Plan shows the Wards of the City as lately altered by the Legislature and designates with accuracy most of the Streets, Wharves, Ships &c. lying to the Southward of a line beginning on the North River at West Street thence extending through said Street to Hudson Street, thence to Leonard Street, thence to Broadway, from hence in a line to Bayard St. through this Street to Hovary Road, thence to Bullock St. and through this Street to the East River. Except Broadway & Spring St. none of the Streets to the Northward of the line mentioned have been added to the Corporation or have been approved and opened under their authority they are therefore to be considered subject to such future arrangements as the Corporation may deem best calculated to promote the health, introduce regularity and conduce to the convenience of the City.

New York, Nov. 1803

Sanborn Map Company, 1913. MAP OF  
NEW YORK CITY SOUTH OF BLEECKER STREET  
Scale: 200' = 1"

Figure 14

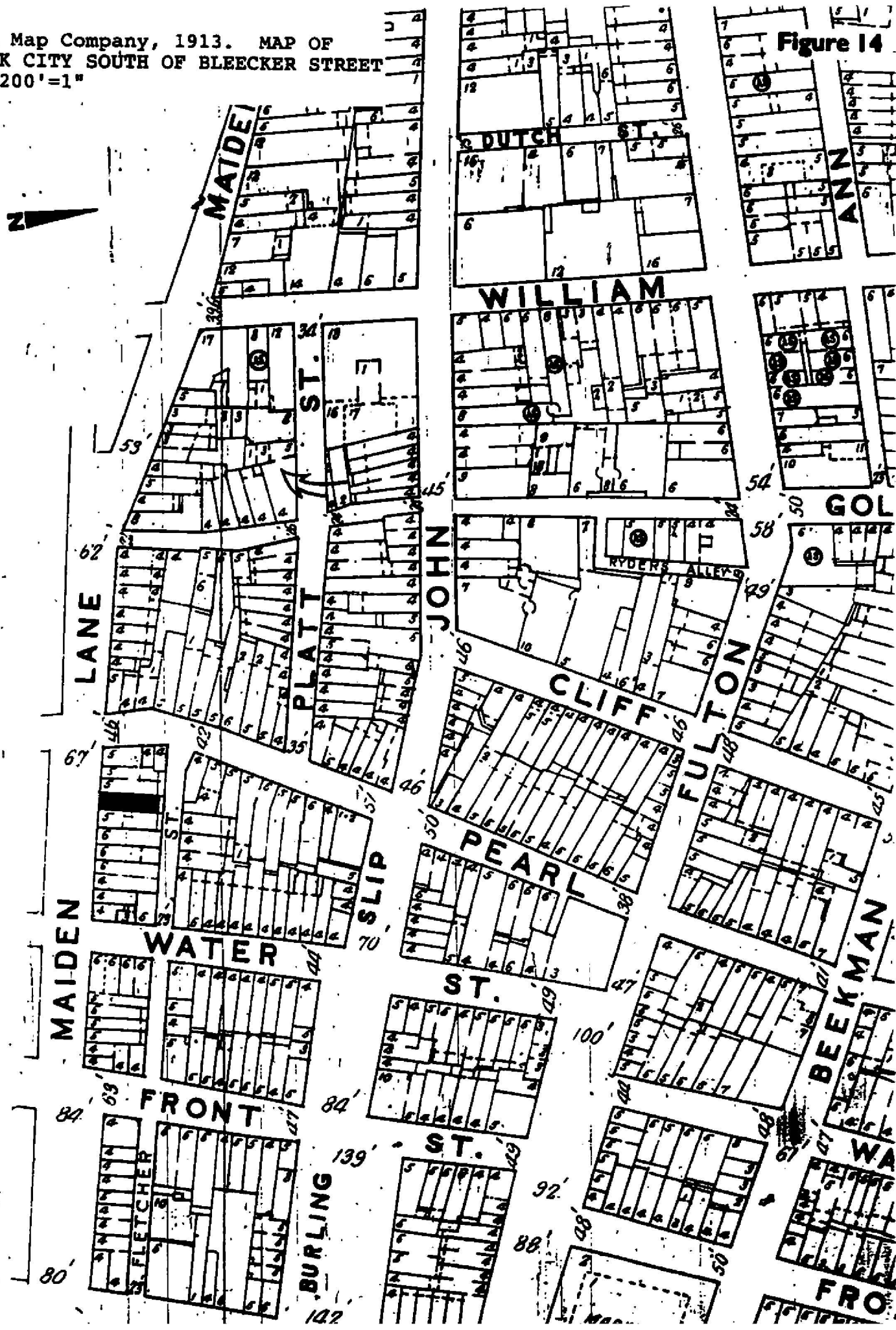
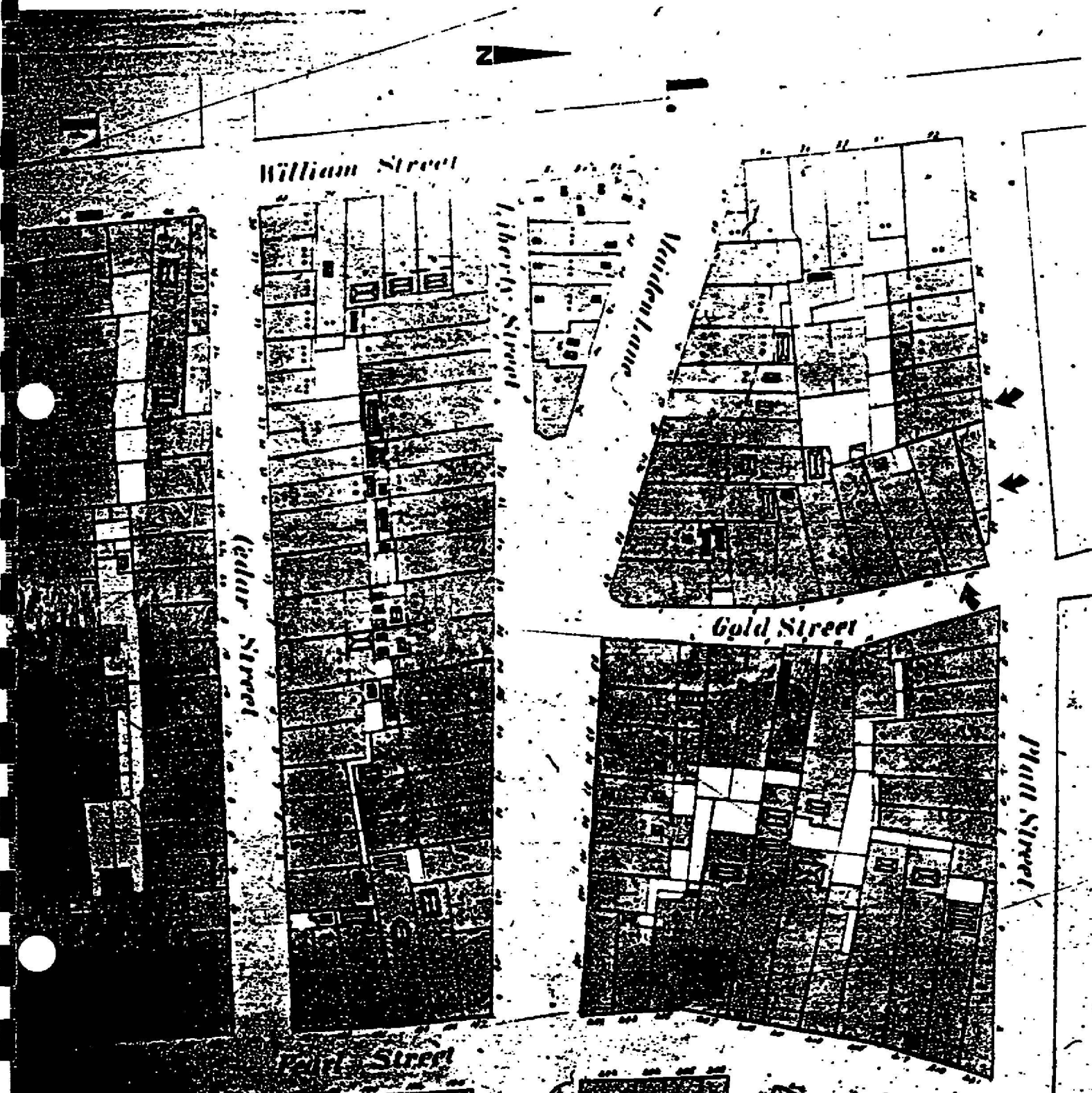




Figure 15

William Perris, 1855. MAPS OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

Scale: 100' = 1 1/4" Map is on microfilm, hence the poor quality reproduction.



Photocopied from Innes 1902: 299.  
 This same photo, taken "about 1910"  
 is included in the New York Public  
 Library's Photographic Views of New  
 York City (it may not be reproduced).  
 The caption reads, in part, "on the  
 north corner is the 'Jack Knife'  
 building, #19, a triangular structure  
 that is a remnant of a larger  
 building, part of which was demolished  
 when Jacob Platt cut Platt St. through  
 in 1934. #15 has been occupied by  
 Thomas Prosser & Son since 1845 [sic].  
 This firm, the American representatives  
 of the Krupp Steel Works of Germany,  
 will move to 120 Wall St. according  
 to the NEW YORK TIMES of Dec. 8, 1937."  
 The 4 story white building - middle  
 right - is 15 Gold Street. View is  
 looking south toward Maiden Lane.



VIEW OF GOLD STREET.  
 Looking towards Maiden Lane. The ancient "Golden Hill."

# WILLIAM

Figure 17

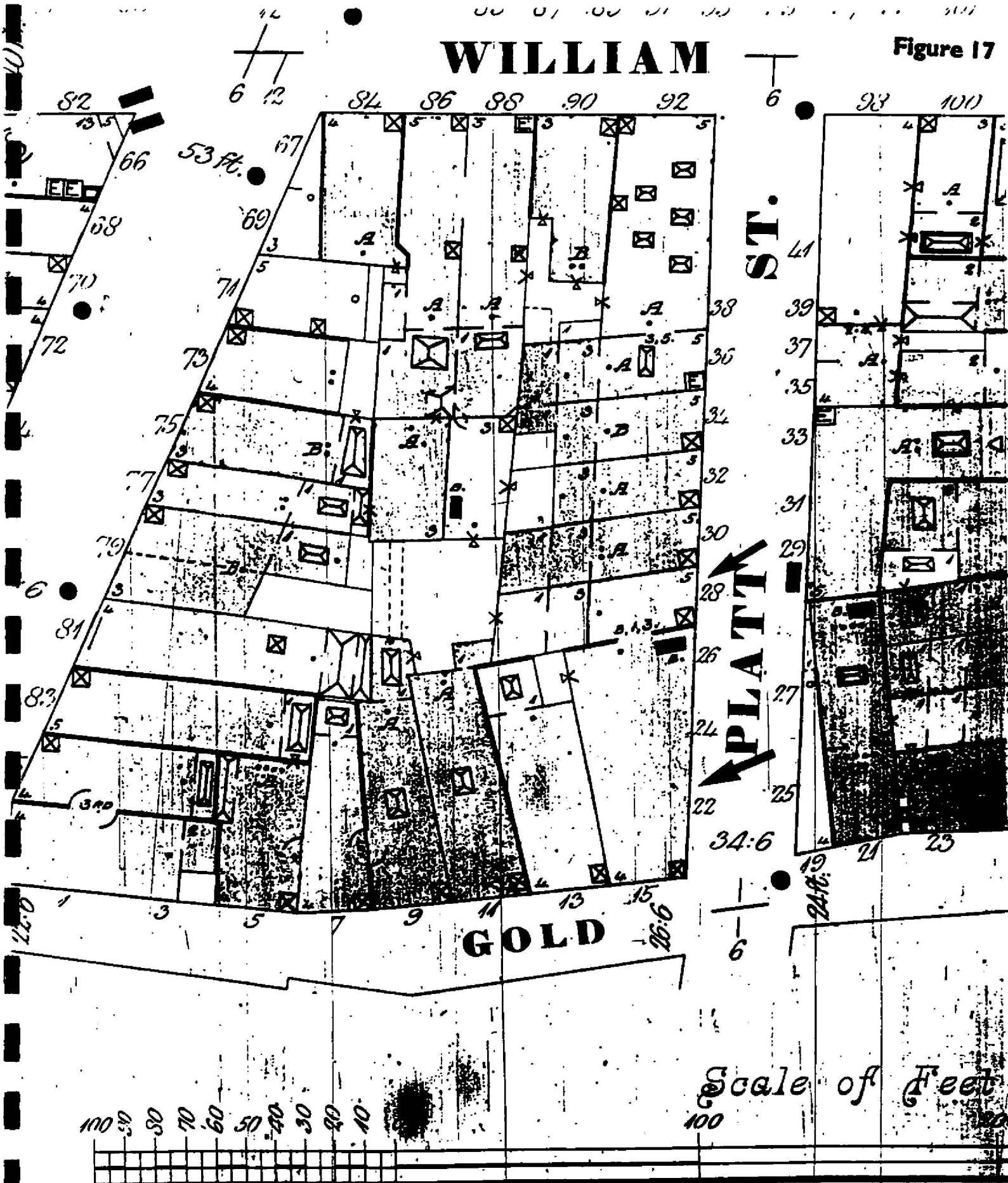
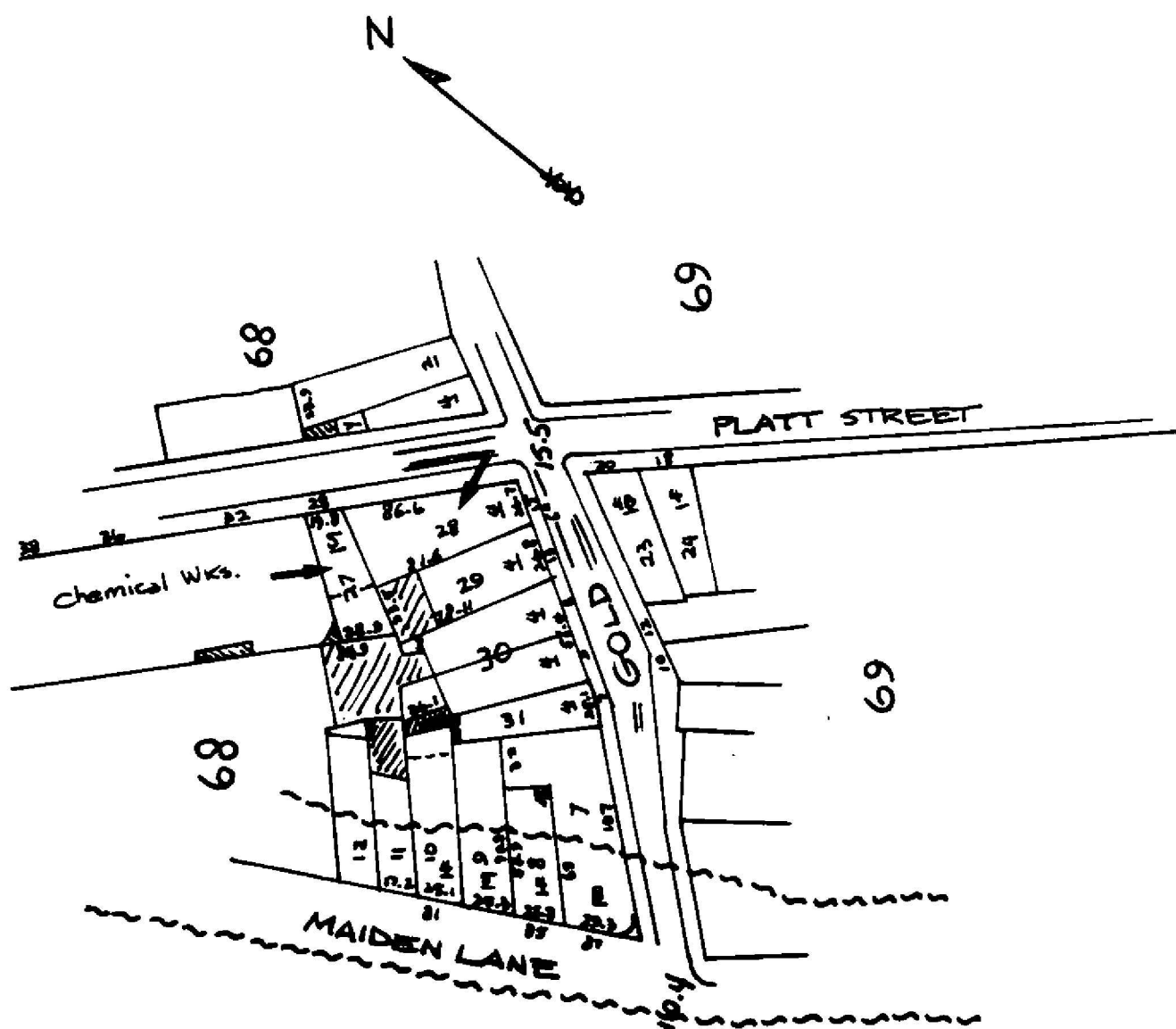




Figure 18



~ ~ ~ OLD WATER COURSE  
 \\\ vacant land

BROMLEY 1902

VOL. I PL. 4  
 80' to 1"

COLLECTION NYPL  
 R. 5

Figure 19

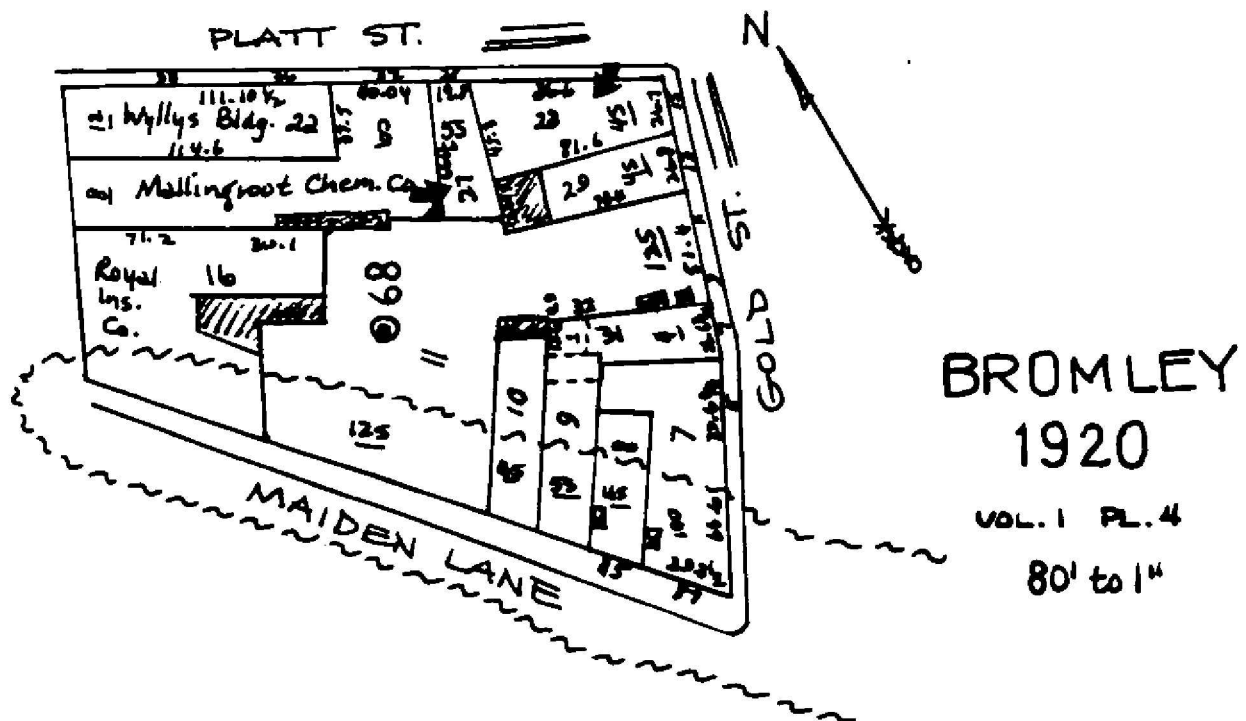
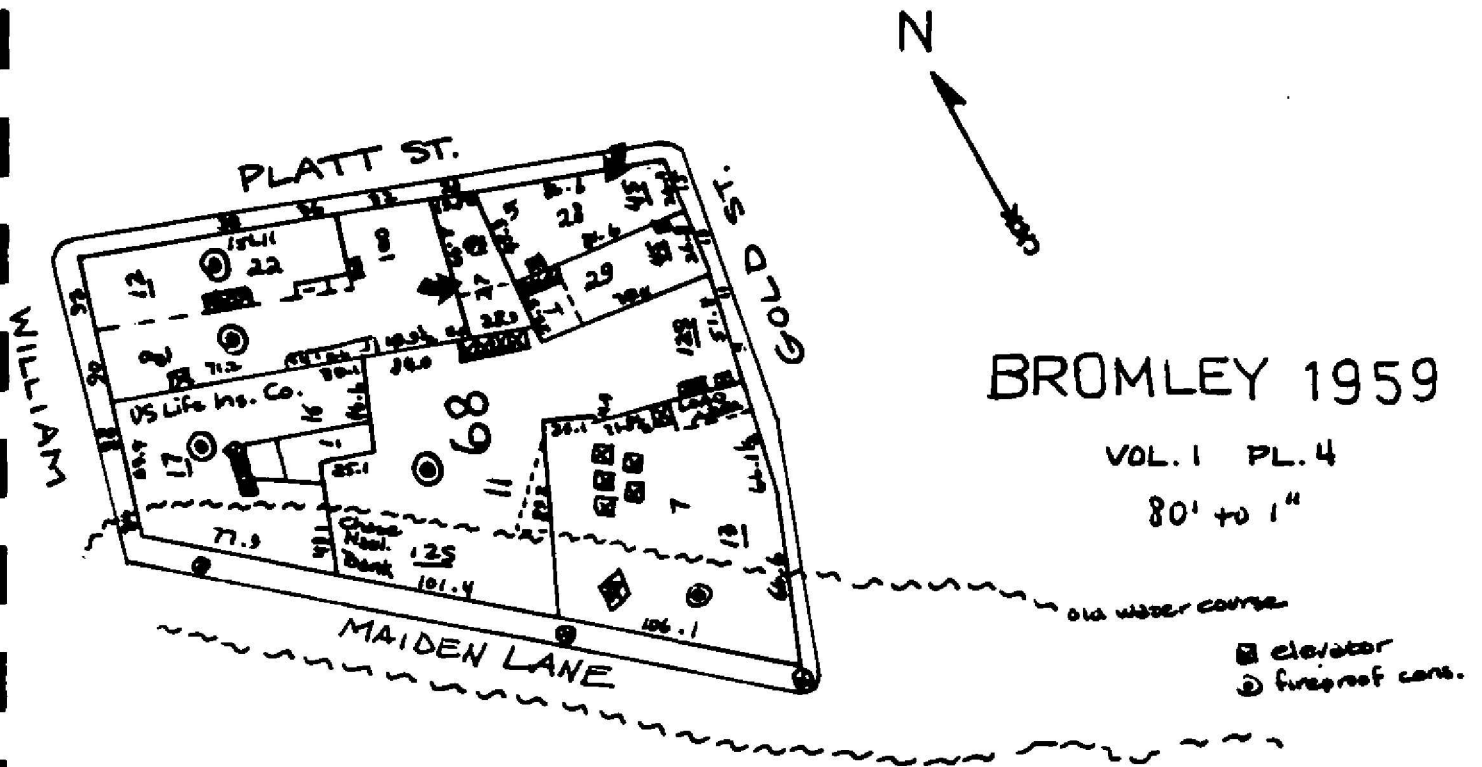
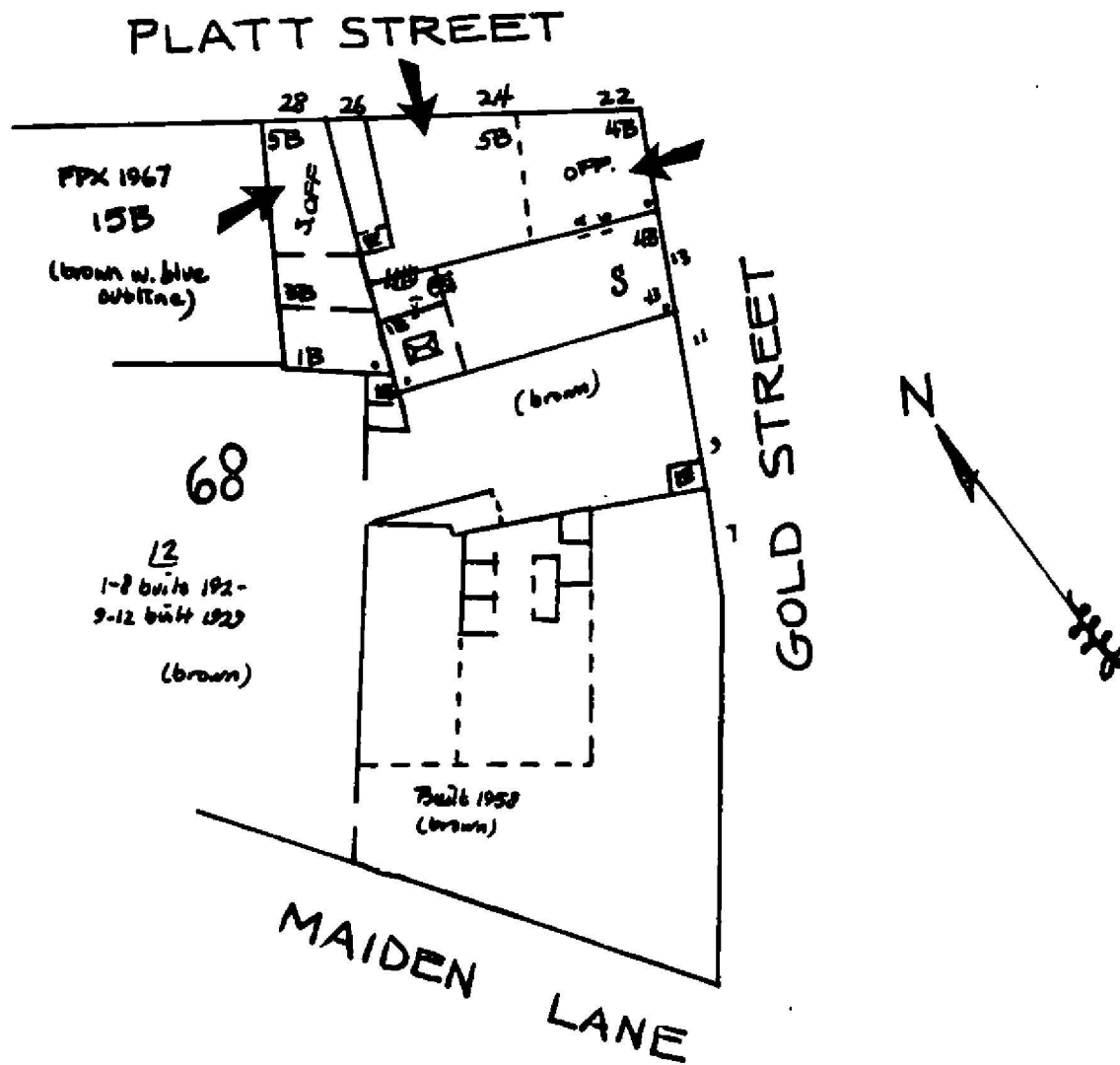


Figure 20



SANBORN

1973

(updated from 1923)

VOL. 15 PL. 12 NYPL

50' to 1"

All structures PINK UNLESS  
SPECIFIED.

-RES-

Figure 21

Locations of soil borings taken in 1981. (Reproduced from blueprint paper.)



Photo 1: Looking south from the corner of Gold and Platt Streets toward Maiden Lane. Site is vacant lot to the right.

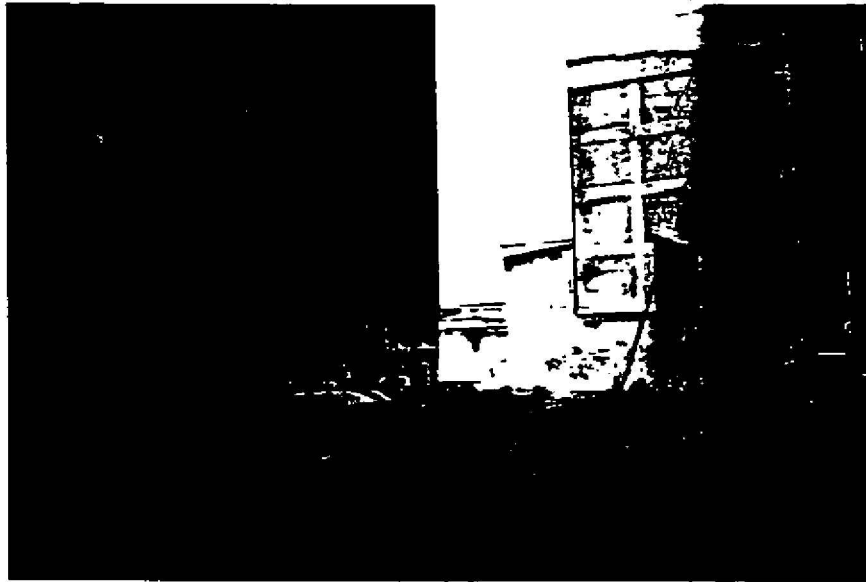


Photo 2: Looking southwest from the corner of Gold and Platt Streets toward the project site.



Photo 3: Looking west along Platt Street from the corner of Gold and Platt Streets. Project site is vacant lot on the left.



## APPENDIX

Results from site files review at the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and the New York State Museum in Albany, New York.





New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic  
Preservation

File search results:

1.	A061-01-1273	Sheridan Square	historic
2.	A061-01-1285	Washington St. Urban Renewal	historic
3.	A061-01-1304	City Hall Park	historic
4.	A061-01-0604	209 Water St.	historic
5.	A061-01-0623 D0-23	Telco Block	historic
6.	081-01-0001 N/A	structure	
7.	061-01-0014 N/A	structure	
8.	A061-01-1283	Barclays Bank Site	historic
9.	A061-01-1284	Assay Site	historic
10.	A061-01-0490	The Battery/Castle Clinton	historic
11.	A061-01-0491	Municipal Ferry Piers	historic
12.	A061-01-1271	175 Water Street	historic
13.	A061-01-1282	Broad Street Plaza Site	historic
14.	A061-01-1286	Expansion of NYU Library	historic
15.	A061-01-0074	Empire Stores Monitoring	historic
16.	A016-01-0179	Fulton St. dock remnant	historic
17.	A016-01-0102	Corporation House	historic

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE FILE SEARCH  
 NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM  
 CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER  
 ALBANY, NEW YORK

NYSM SITE #	OTHER SITE #'S	SITE NAME	TIME PERIOD	SITE SOURCE TYPE OF DATA	15' QUAD NAME	7.5' QUAD NAME	REPORTER NAME	PROJECT NAME OR #
4059	ACP NYRK-9	NO INFO	NO INFO	VILL AGE	STATON ISLAND QUAD	JERSEY CITY QUAD	PARKER	NO INFO
4060	ACP NYRK-(UN NUMBERED )	NO INFO	NO INFO	VILL AGE	BROOKLYN QUAD	BROOKLYN QUAD	PARKER	NO INFO

2/20/92 To: CECE KIRKORIAN, HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Project: Topo. Maps: BROOKLYN, JERSEY CITY  
BIA/Initials) Anthropological Survey, NYSM

New York State Museum Prehistoric Archaeological Site Files

**EVALUATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY FOR PREHISTORIC (NATIVE AMERICAN) SITES**

Examination of the data suggests that the location indicated has the following sensitivity rating:

**HIGH PROBABILITY OF PRODUCING PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA**

The reasons for this finding are given below:

- ☐ A RECORDED SITE IS INDICATED IN OR IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO THE LOCATION AND WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE IT COULD BE IMPACTED BY CONSTRUCTION.
- ☒ A RECORDED SITE IS INDICATED SOME DISTANCE AWAY BUT DUE TO THE MARGIN OF ERROR IN THE LOCATION DATA IT IS POSSIBLE THE SITE ACTUALLY EXISTS IN OR IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO THE LOCATION.
- ☐ THE TERRAIN IN THE LOCATION IS SIMILAR TO TERRAIN IN THE GENERAL VICINITY WHERE RECORDED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES ARE INDICATED.
- ☐ THE PHYSIOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCATION SUGGEST A HIGH PROBABILITY OF PREHISTORIC OCCUPATION OR USE.
- ☐ THE PHYSIOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCATION SUGGEST A MEDIUM PROBABILITY OF PREHISTORIC OCCUPATION OR USE.
- ☐ THE PHYSIOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCATION SUGGEST A LOW PROBABILITY OF PREHISTORIC OCCUPATION OR USE.
- ☐ EVIDENCE OF CULTURAL OR NATURAL DESTRUCTIVE IMPACTS SUGGESTS A LOSS OF ORIGINAL CULTURAL DEPOSITS IN THIS LOCATION.
- ☐ THE PHYSIOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCATION ARE MIXED, A HIGHER THAN AVERAGE PROBABILITY OF PREHISTORIC OCCUPATION OR USE IS SUGGESTED FOR AREAS IN THE VICINITY OF EITHER PRESENT OR PREEXISTING BODIES OF WATER, WATERWAYS, OR SWAMPS. A HIGHER THAN AVERAGE PROBABILITY IS SUGGESTED FOR ROCK FACES WHICH AFFORD SHELTER OR FOR AREAS SHELTERED BY BLUFFS OR HILLS. AREAS IN THE VICINITY OF CHERT DEPOSITS HAVE A HIGHER THAN AVERAGE PROBABILITY OF USE. DISTINCTIVE HILLS OR LOW RIDGES HAVE AN AVERAGE PROBABILITY OF USE AS A BURYING GROUND. LOW PROBABILITY IS SUGGESTED FOR AREAS OF EROSIONAL STEEP SLOPE.
- ☐ PROBABILITY RATING IS BASED ON THE ASSUMED PRESENCE OF INTACT ORIGINAL DEPOSITS, POSSIBILITY UNDER FILL, IN THE AREA. IF NEAR WATER OR IF DEEPLY BURIED, MATERIALS MAY OCCUR SUBMERGED BELOW THE WATER TABLE.
- ☐ INFORMATION ON OTHER SITES MAY BE AVAILABLE IN A REGIONAL INVENTORY MAINTAINED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATION(S).

COMMENTS:

cc: N.Y.S. OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION; HISTORIC PRESERVATION FIELD SERVICES BUREAU